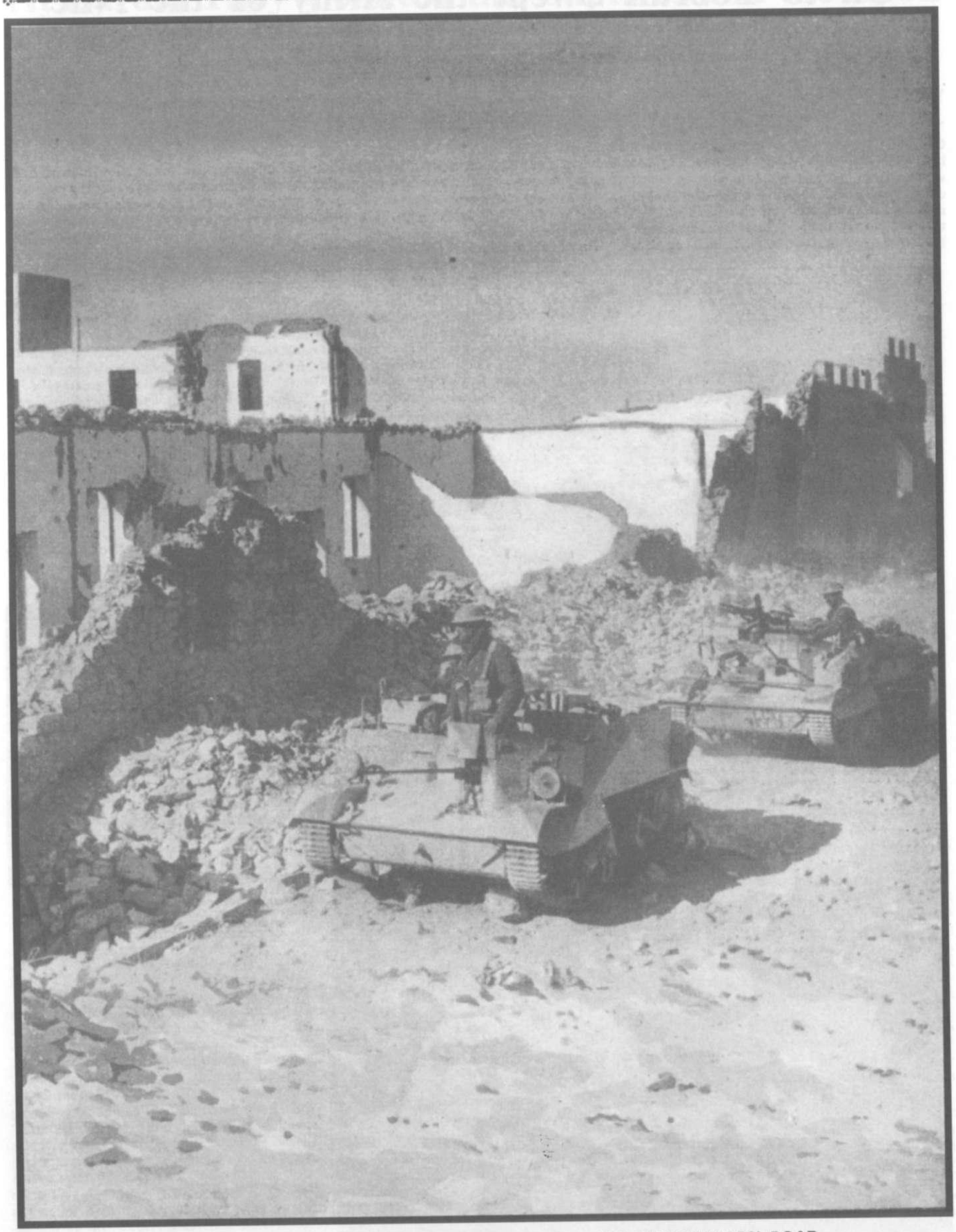


PAST GRAZIANI'S SHATTERED STRONGHOLD LIES THE CONQUERORS' ROAD

Fort Capuzzo, whose wrecked buildings these British Bren-gun carriers are passing, was an Italian stronghold south of Bardia. It was captured by British troops on the same day that they occupied Sollum, Dec. 16, 1940. With the capture of the fort the Army of the Nile found itself over the Libyan frontier inside the enemy's own territory. Thence the victorious army of General Wavell proceeded to Bardia, which early in the New Year was stormed by the Australians and British mechanized cavalry.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

On to Tobruk Swept the Army of the Nile

Continuing his masterly strategy in the Western Desert, General Wavell followed up his capture of Bardia by the investment of Tobruk, the next centre of Italian power along the coast. Meanwhile, the full extent of the Bardia victory became apparent as the prisoners and the spoil were counted.

EVEN before Bardia fell the mechanized patrols of Wavell's army were reported to be south of Tobruk, Graziani's naval base and military stronghold some 80 miles along the coast to the west. A few days more, and the place was closely invested. No reinforcements could reach it from the west, nor could any of the troops leave it who had formed its garrison or had struggled into it before the British onrush.

Once again the desert rose in dust as the Imperial Army of the Nile thundered across it. Guns rattled into position, heavy tanks lumbered up to support their lighter brethren, thousands of troops marched along the sandy tracks or were borne swiftly on motor lorries. (What an improvement on the way their fathers had "foot-slogged" through the Flanders mud!)

Tobruk was strongly defended—stronger even than Bardia had been—but it was not anticipated that it would stand a prolonged siege. Its garrison was believed to be fewer in numbers than that which had endeavoured to hold Bardia, and it was entrusted with the defence of a far larger area; the outer perimeter of the defences, indeed, was some 25 miles in length, although in front of the town itself was a much shorter line of trenches, plentifully supplied with anti-tank obstacles and machine-gun posts. There was good reason to believe that the equipment of the defenders was decidedly inadequate, as so much had been lost in the disasters of the preceding weeks. Then while the defenders were dispirited by those disasters, the attackers were cheered by the consciousness of victories already won and filled with hope of even greater victories to come.

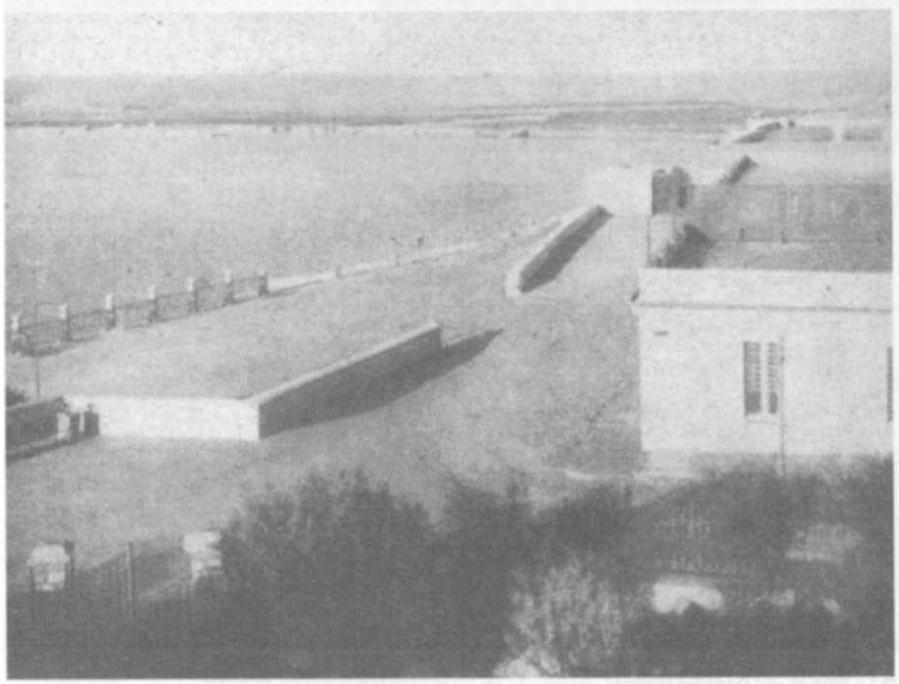
Steadily the Italian outposts were driven in, while their defences were plastered day after day by the British bombers. Tobruk's aerodrome at El Adem, 18 miles to the south in the heart of the desert, was so heavily bombed that on January 6 it was abandoned by the Italians. Well might it be described as the graveyard of the Regia Aeronautica in Libya, for when the British troops entered they found the burnt out remains of 25 Italian bombers and 43 fighters which had been put out of action on the ground by the R.A.F. The Italians had removed much of their material and several aeroplane engines, but such was their haste they made no attempt to destroy the hangars or plant.

Meanwhile, the battlefield at Bardia was being carefully cleared. For miles the desert was strewn with abandoned guns, tanks, and lorries. So great was the spoil that it was days before it could be properly enumerated. Then it was announced in Cairo that the British had captured or destroyed in the Bardia action 368 medium and field guns, 26 heavy anti-aircraft guns, 68 light guns, 13 medium tanks and 117 light tanks, and 708 transport vehicles of one kind or another. "The high degree of unserviceability in the equipment and, more especially, in the mechanical transport, resulted largely from our bombardment of Bardia, but it also shows complete lack of maintenance during and after the Italian rout from Sidi Barrani."

The Italian casualties in the Bardia battle were stated to amount to 2,041 officers and 42,837 men killed or captured. More than 40,000 of these were prisoners—10,000 more than had been announced at first, for it was found that the Italian army in Bardia included a number of departmental and administrative units. The total British and Australian casualties incurred in the capture of Bardia were less than 600.

FREE FRENCH units operating with the British forces in the Western Desert contributed to the fall of Bardia. At the same time a detachment of French marines cut the road from Bardia to Tobruk. These two Frenchmen are seen with an Italian A.A. gun.

The Italians were bombed out of their air bases in Eastern Libya during the British stranglehold on Tobruk. On this map the lines of attack are shown by arrows (land) and 'planes.
Courtesy of the "Daily Telegraph"



TOBRUK, Italian naval base in Libya, about 60 miles west of Bardia, was subjected to increasing air bombardment by the R.A.F. after the fall of Bardia on January 5. Tobruk became the next vital objective for the British in their advance into Libya. Part of its extensive harbour is here shown.
Photos, Dorien Leigh and British Official: Crown Copyright

At Bardia They Counted the Captives and the Spoil

THE CAPTURE OF BARDIA, had the place been garrisoned by other than dispirited troops, might have been no easy matter, since for three years the Italians had been strengthening what was already a natural fortress. Top, our artillery bombard Bardia. Note the greatcoats, suggesting how chilly the desert can be in the early hours. Below, British in the line at Bardia.

Another communiqué issued by G.H.Q., Cairo, struck a rather amusing note. "It transpires that on the night before Bardia fell the Blackshirt corps commander and his two Blackshirt divisional generals deserted their troops, leaving the Regular commander to fight on. One of the Blackshirt commanders has since been picked up with the bulk of his staff, north of Bardia. General Berganzoli "Electric Beard" as he was nicknamed by his troops in Spain because of the black profusion of his facial appendage and the others are still missing. It is possible that they may have decamped by motor-boat, specially reserved for the purpose." The search is still continuing, concluded the communiqué dryly; and two days later one of the missing three was captured while plodding across the desert in the direction of Tobruk.

Italian losses since the Western Desert offensive began on December 9 now totalled nearly 80,000 killed, wounded and prisoners, while the war material captured included 41 medium and 162 light tanks, 589 guns with more than 3,000 rounds of ammunition, more than 600 machine-guns, 700 light guns, and 11,000,000 rounds of small arms and machine-gun ammunition, and at least 1,700 lorries. Not a word of these crippling losses was permitted to be told to the Italian people by Mussolini, who on his own declaration writes the Italian communiqués so that he may be sure that they tell the truth. On January 11 the Italian General Staff announced that the Italian losses in the North African campaign during December, i.e. the Battle for Sidi Barrani, amounted to 77 killed, 307 wounded, and 343 missing!

News of the fate of their comrades in Bardia was conveyed to the Tobruk garrison by leaflets dropped by the R.A.F. Gifts of another kind were showered by our bombers on the Italian aerodromes along the Libyan shore. Soon it was reported by our patrolling aircraft that the aerodromes at Derna, Martuba, El Tmimi, and El Gazala were all empty of enemy aircraft, except for a considerable number that were lying on the ground unserviceable. The seaplane base at Bomba also appeared to have been abandoned by the enemy. Our fighter squadrons were active, too, destroying many enemy 'planes, either in combat or on the ground.

From Rome there came suggestions that the Italians were concentrating their forces still to the west, possibly in the neighbourhood of Benghazi, now Marshal Graziani's headquarters since he had been chased out of Cirene by the R.A.F. (They gave him no peace, however, at Benghazi.) And to Benghazi came a horde of panic-stricken settlers, who had abandoned the olive groves which they had so laboriously established in the more fertile tracts of Cyrenaica.

GUN POSITIONS had been erected all round the perimeter of the Bardia defences, but most of them were rapidly put out of action and captured, as was this one. Some 200 field guns of this kind were captured during the Bardia battle. *Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Bardia Was a Resounding Victory for the R.A.F.

In the operations in Libya the Regia Aeronautica was singularly ineffective, so great and decisive was the mastery of the air scored by Sir Arthur Longmore's airmen. Reasons for the predominance of the R.A.F. are not difficult to find ; indeed, more than sufficient were given by the Italians themselves when they were interrogated on the morrow of the fall of Bardia.

WHEN two Italian generals and a number of senior officers, included amongst the first batch of Bardia prisoners, were flown to the Middle East Headquarters of the Imperial Army of the Nile, they explained the defeat of the Italian arms as being very largely due to the bombing of the R.A.F. One commented, "No force in the world could have stood up to it. They came as regularly as the hour chimes of the Bardia clock." Another middle-aged Italian officer said, "Your airmen and your ships never gave us any rest. Bombs and shells seemed to be exploding among our defences night and day. No wonder it wore down the morale of our troops. Your heavy bombers are terrifying."

That extreme cold is not one of the adverse conditions with which pilots of the R.A.F. in the Libyan desert have to contend, as do those operating from Britain, is obvious from the scanty clothing that these two men, sprinting to their machines, are wearing.

So much for the Italian evidence ; now let us hear what a young flying officer of the R.A.F. who flew over the battlefield in a reconnaissance aircraft had to say. "On Sunday I was detailed to fly over the Bardia defences," he said. "Only one complete Italian battery was firing, but other isolated guns were still pumping shells into a wadi (dried-up bed of a river) to the north where our infantry had established a base. At about half-past nine I saw six of our tanks snaking their way towards the battery, pouring out yellow flashes of fire without interruption. Their fire must have been very accurate, because when I was within 200 yards of the enemy the opposing fire ceased and I saw the Italian gunners running forward waving their hats and jackets. I was circling round at about 150 feet and got a wonderful view of our infantry, who were following the tanks and mopping-up the Italians as they came running from their entrenchments. I dived on a detachment of our troops and dropped a message directing them to some isolated groups of Italians who were obviously anxious to surrender. I saw one column of prisoners about 1,000 yards long slowly winding its way from Bardia towards Capuzzo, apparently unescorted."

When they landed, the R.A.F. pilots mixed with the prisoners and listened with interest to the tales they had to tell. Some of the Italians, it transpired, had not eaten for three days, and the water shortage had been very acute. Many were barefooted as their boots were completely worn out; men otherwise quite fit had to be given lifts on British transport vehicles because their feet were lacerated and bleeding. Some of the more temperamental officers were weeping.

Big bombs for the remaining Italian strongholds in Libya are here laid out on the desert for a final examination by the armourers before they are loaded on to the bomb-racks.

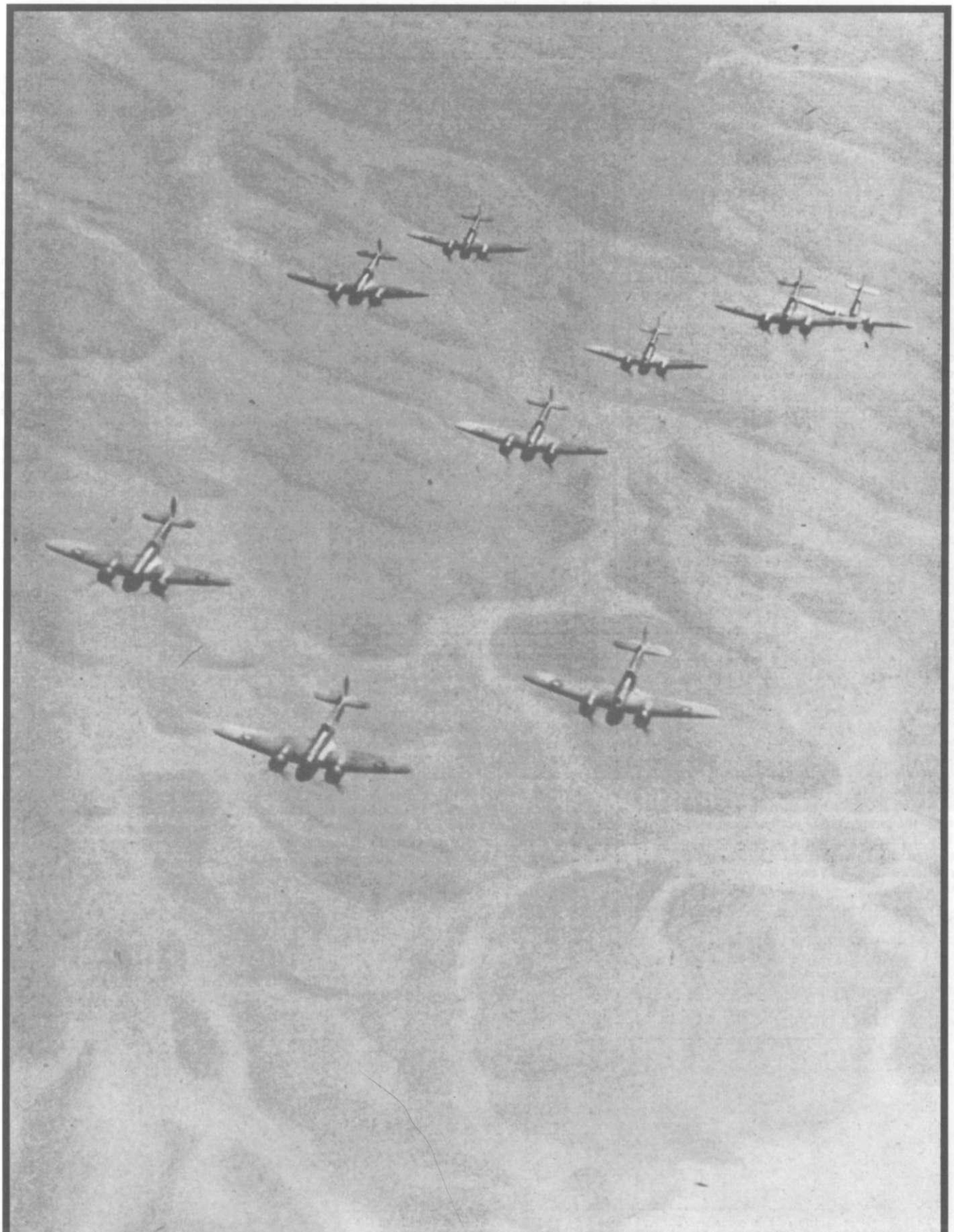
On a plateau near Fort Capuzzo a solitary A.P.M. with a handful of good-natured Tommies marshalled thousands of prisoners and kept them in some kind of order. Down the hill which leads to the port of Sollum a column of seventeen hundred Italians was headed by one British military policeman. "Who are you—the Pied Piper of Bardia ?" shouted a Tommy to the Red Cap. Some of the prisoners left the column and climbed over the rocks, taking a short cut to the port. No one minded. In any case they all reached the bottom in time to catch the ship. Before going aboard the ship which took them to safe custody, many of the Italians rushed into the sea to bathe their tired feet. Others retrieved oranges which were floating in the sea, and until restrained ate them ravenously.

Next we may give the story of an R.A.F. sergeant who, when piloting a Hurricane over Bardia, dived into a formation of five Italian S 79s which were bombing a British naval unit. "At 300 yards," he said, "I fired my first burst. Within half a minute one of the Savoias had caught fire and was plunging into the sea. I turned to attack another and saw two of the crew bale out as my fire was again successful. The third in my bag got it in the starboard motor, and the aircraft went into a long glide which finished in the Mediterranean. I silenced the return fire of the fourth Savoia, and pieces of metal flew off to starboard. There was little chance of her ever making her base. It was a pity my ammunition ran out, as the fifth was a sitter."

But, in fact, there was little air fighting over the Western Desert, for our Hurricanes and Gladiators were demonstrably superior to the Italian 'planes. Every aerodrome in Libya was bombed, some of them many times, while tons of bombs were dropped on shipping and the harbour of Tripoli, capital of Libya, 600 miles west of Tobruk. Wellingtons and Blenheims, Hurricanes and Gladiators, together with American Glenn Martins — between them they smashed Graziani's air arm to bits.

BOMBERS, too, undergo a thorough overhaul before every flight. Here an aircraftman is pumping up the huge balloon tires of a Bristol Bombay bomber before it takes off. *Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright*

British Bombers Swoop from Desert Skies



BLENHEIMS IN LIBYA have proved a thorn in the side of Marshal Graziani's forces on account of their relentless bombardment of Italian aerodromes, camps, motor transport, troop concentrations and lines of communication. This formation of Blenheim bombers, aircraft which are among the fastest medium bombers in the world, is seen far out over the Western Desert on its way to attack Italian military objectives. A large share of the credit for the fall of Bardia must go to the R.A.F.

From these Ports Hitler Plans to Invade Us

For many months past the Fuehrer, with practically the whole of the Continent beneath his heel, has threatened Britain with invasion. So far it has not materialized, but here we give some account of the ports from which the great Nazi Armada may be expected to come—if it comes at all.

LIKE Napoleon before him, Hitler controls the whole of the European coasts that face the west. From the Pyrenees to the Arctic Circle and beyond stretches his dominion, some 1,500 miles of ocean-washed coast, rich in harbours where fleets may anchor, armadas congregate, and U-boats and raiders lurk. We may well imagine that as he looks at the map spread out before him on his desk in the Chancellery, the Fuehrer must tell himself and the yes-men peeping over his shoulder that with so vast a sweep of territory under his control nothing can save England now. "From here I will strike—and here—and here," and down comes Adolf's finger on this port and on that.

Most northerly of the "invasion ports" are those on the coast of Norway. Narvik, which lies beyond the Arctic Circle, is perhaps one of them, as the warm waters of the Gulf Stream keep its harbour ice-free throughout the winter; Bergen, 700 miles to the south, is certainly amongst them. Since it was seized by the Nazis on that April morning of treachery it has been visited time and again by the bombers of our Coastal Command and the Air Arm of the Fleet. Reports have come to hand from time to time of troop assemblies in its neighbourhood; and though the Nazi army of occupation in Norway has been much reduced in numbers of late months, we may be sure that a very considerable proportion is still kept in or near Bergen—ready for a dash on the Orkneys or Scotland, if an opportunity should present itself.

On the other side of the Skagerrak lies Denmark, whose principal port in the North Sea, Esbjerg, can hardly be included in our category. But only a few score miles to the south are the great ports of north-western Germany, Kiel and Hamburg, Bremen and Bremerhaven, Emden and Wilhelmshaven. All of these may be counted as invasion ports, and hence all of them have come to know full well the sound of our bombers' engines. The docks at Hamburg in particular, extensive as they are, have been devastated in raid after raid, and the same may be said of the shipbuilding yards on the Weser.

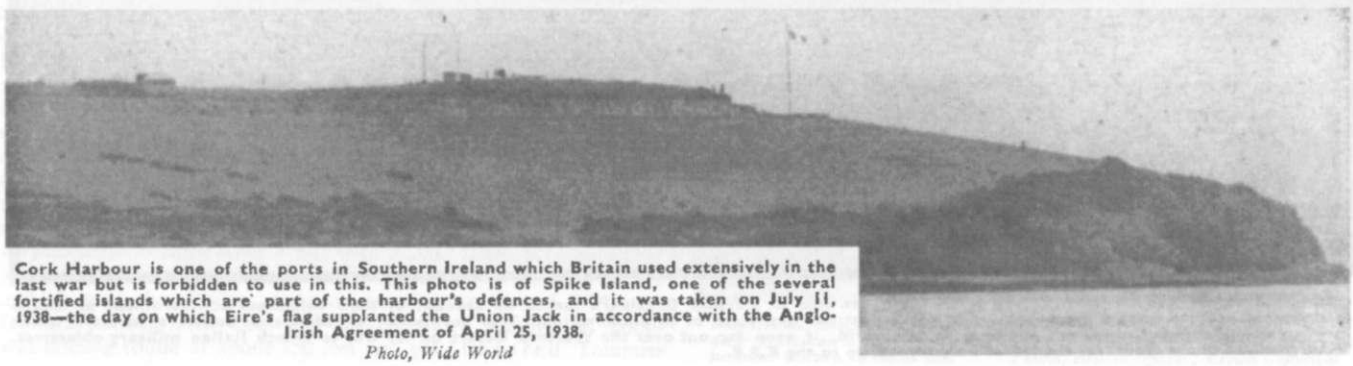
From ports in North Germany to Hull or Newcastle the distance is only some 350 miles; it is even less from the great ports of the Low Countries—Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Flushing and Antwerp—to England's east coast, and less still between Ostend, Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne, and the coast of Kent. Such a situation never arose in the last war, for although the Belgian ports were captured by the Germans, the invaders never secured Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, or Dieppe, not to mention Havre, Cherbourg, and the rest. Many of these, indeed, served as bases of the British Army on the Continent. Being so near to England, Boulogne and Calais in particular might be regarded as being the most obvious invasion ports, and there is plenty of evidence that the Germans think so, too. Large numbers of flat-bottomed boats have been reported there by our air observers, and it is known that many thousands of troops are distributed along the coast of Northern France.

From any of the ports of Western Europe included in this map Hitler may (or may not) strike at the British Isles. As will be seen, if distance were the only obstacle it might be readily surmounted.

When the invasion threat was first realized, it was the general view that the onslaught would be delivered from just across the Straits of Dover. It was thought that Hitler would make an effort to decoy away the ships of the British Navy; then when the Straits were left, if only for a few hours, unguarded, he would launch across the narrow seas his armada of barges, crammed to the waterline with men and tanks and guns. At the same time the Luftwaffe operating with overwhelming force would drive the R.A.F. from the skies, and lay Dover and Chatham, Portsmouth and most of London in ruins.

We do not know if this was the plan in Hitler's mind, but if ever he entertained it he may well have come to the conclusion that it involved too many "ifs" for its successful completion. If the British Navy could be decoyed away, if the Luftwaffe could secure supremacy in the air, if the tides were favourable and the sea was not too rough—a boisterous Channel crossing might play havoc with the invaders' insides!—then, Hitler's Armada might sail, his men might land in Kent or Sussex.

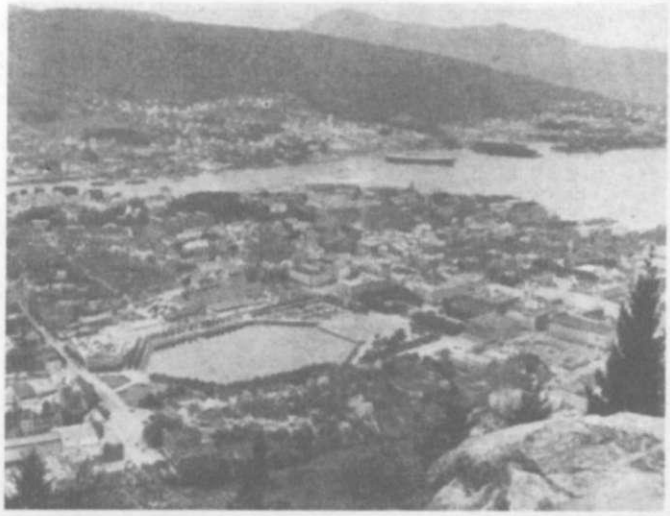
Of late months, however, it has been thought more likely that if the invasion comes it will be from more than one direction. Thus while an attack on Scotland—up the Firth of Forth maybe, or against the Orkneys and the Western Isles—was delivered from Norway, a second onslaught might be delivered from the Scheldt across the North Sea against the east coast, while a third might have for its objective south-west England, or more likely, Southern Ireland. Hence the centre of interest has now shifted to the more western ports of Hitler's Europe—Havre and Cherbourg, St. Malo and Brest, Lorient, St. Nazaire, and even Bordeaux. At each of these places there have been reported troop concentrations and fleet assemblies, and so each has received innumerable visits from our bombing 'planes, while the ocean that links them is watched unceasingly by ships of the Royal Navy. From the ports of Brittany it would be a matter of a few hours' sailing to



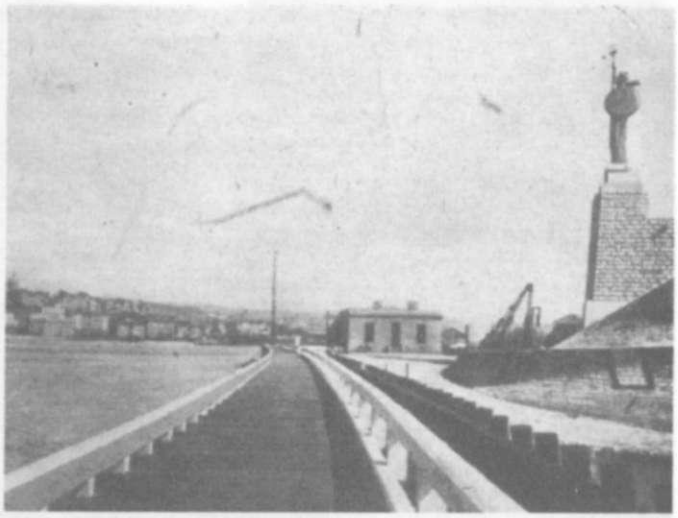
Cork Harbour is one of the ports in Southern Ireland which Britain used extensively in the last war but is forbidden to use in this. This photo is of Spike Island, one of the several fortified islands which are part of the harbour's defences, and it was taken on July 11, 1938—the day on which Eire's flag supplanted the Union Jack in accordance with the Anglo-Irish Agreement of April 25, 1938.

Photo, Wide World

So Near Are They to Britain—and Yet So Far!



BERGEN was one of the Norwegian ports occupied by the Nazis at the beginning of April 1940, stands on a peninsula in a deep bay, has a well-equipped harbour and is an important industrial centre.

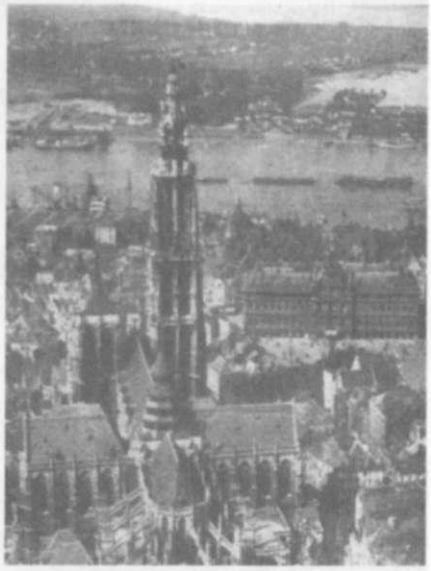


BOULOGNE, so familiar to people travelling to the Continent, is memorable in the story of invasion, for on its cliffs in 1804 Napoleon assembled the great army which he hoped to land on the Kentish coast.

OSTEND, an important Belgian port, was in German hands from Oct. 16, 1914, until Oct. 17, 1918. British warships on April 23 and May 9, 1918, attempted to block the harbour.

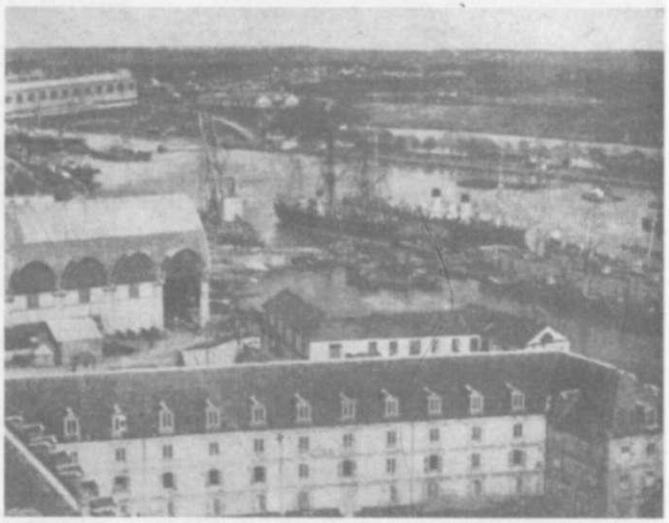
Eire, that member of the British Commonwealth which still seeks safety in an outmoded neutrality. During the last war Britain enjoyed the use of naval bases in Eire (in particular Berehaven, Lough Swilly, and Queenstown, at the head of Cork Harbour), but since 1938 Eire's defence has been a matter for Eire alone—and how weak she is!—and Britain has been deprived of harbours which would be of inestimable value in fighting the U-boats preying on the ships which feed the people of Britain and of Eire alike. Lorient has been in the news of recent weeks as a base for Germany's submarines, and even from Bordeaux there have come stories of invasion manoeuvres on the broad sands of the Gironde estuary. At Merignac airport, still nearer the open sea, large assemblies of troop-carrying aircraft have been reported—assemblies which were countered immediately by our bombers.

These, then, are Hitler's invasion ports—the places where at this very moment are assembled the men and ships and 'planes with which the Fuehrer, in the blindness of his pride and illimitable ambition, intends to bring Britain to her knees.



ANTWERP, Belgium's greatest port lies on the river Scheldt. In the photograph is the tower of its fine cathedral. The city was in German hands from 1914 until 1918.

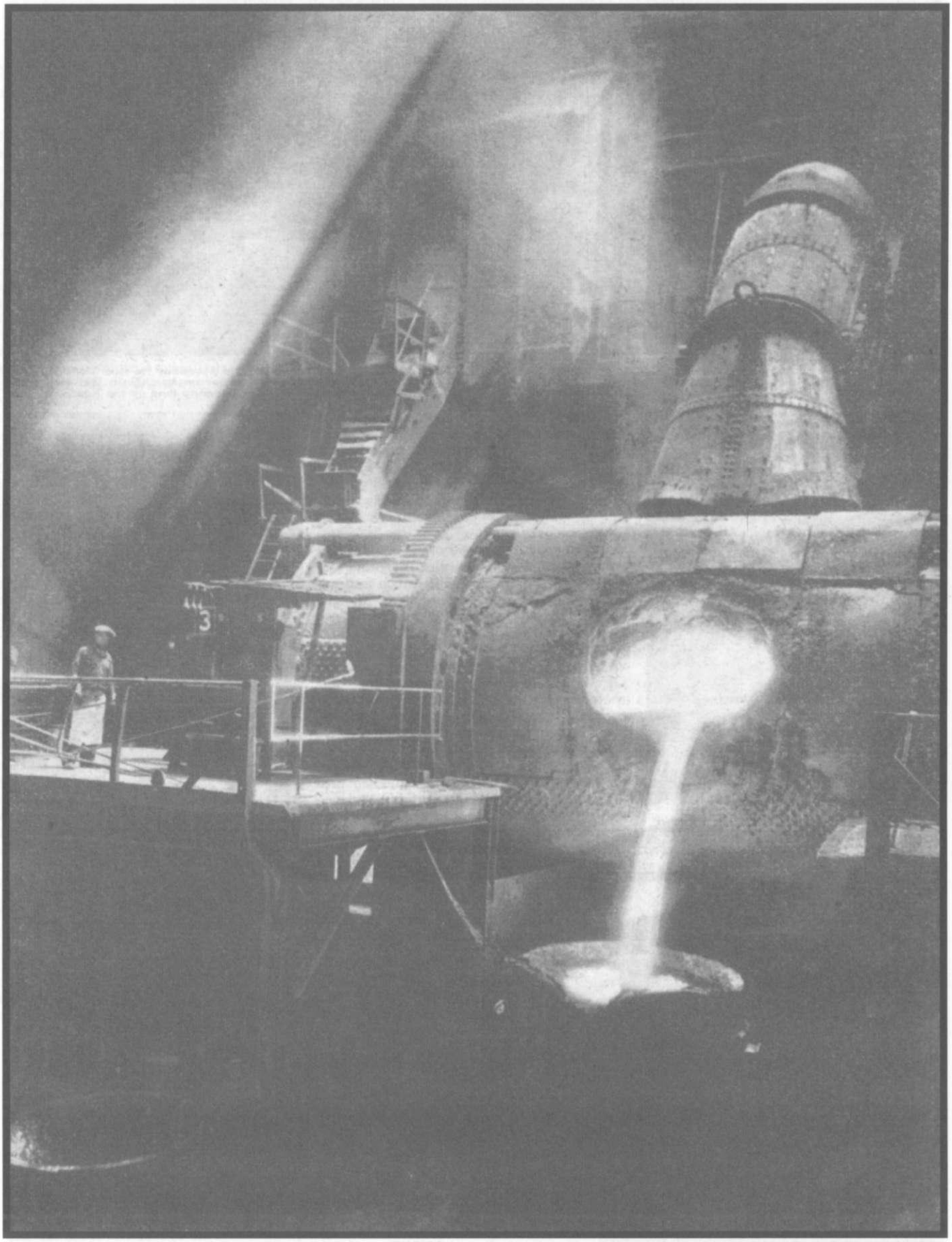
BREST, one of France's chief naval bases, lies at the extreme west of Brittany, and has great naval shipbuilding yards, docks, magazines and barracks, while Brest Roads form a safe anchorage for big ships.



LORIENT, another important naval base, lies on the south coast of Brittany, near the junction of the rivers Scorff and Blavet. In addition to the dockyards it has important naval armament factories.

Photos, Fox, M. O. Henchoz, Dorien Leigh, Fauchois, and E.N.A.

Canada's White-hot Stream of Help for Britain



NICKEL is of supreme importance in the production of nickel steel for armaments, and more than 90 per cent of the world's supply comes from Canada. Here one of the great Canadian smelting furnaces in which nickel is extracted from its ore is disgorging its molten contents to help Britain. Canada's huge war industry is sending Britain Bren guns, trucks, shells, bombs, depth-charges and aeroplane frames in ever-increasing cumbers. Soon the Dominion will be ready to send A.A. guns, naval guns, rifles and tanks. *Photo, Central Press*

Americans Are Helping Us Here in Britain

This smiling woman ambulance driver is a member of the Allied Relief Fund's American Hospital Unit, the second contingent of which arrived in Britain in October, 1940.
Photo, Fox

One of the hundred mobile canteens given by American sympathizers to Britain.

General W. H. Hayes, who commands an American mobile defence unit in Britain, was a member of General Pershing's staff in the Great War of 1914-18.
Photos, Planet News

'Our Purpose and Our Pledge'

OUR most useful role is to act as an arsenal for those nations which are now in actual war with aggressor nations as well as for ourselves. We cannot and will not tell them they must surrender because of their present inability to pay for weapons which we know they must have.

Let us say to the democracies: "We Americans are vitally concerned in your defence of freedom. . . . We shall send you in ever-increasing numbers ships, aeroplanes, tanks and guns. This is our purpose and our pledge." In fulfilment of this purpose we will not be intimidated by the threats of the dictators. Freedom means the supremacy of man's rights. Everywhere our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or keep them. Our strength is in our unity of purpose. To that high conception there can be no end save victory.

President Roosevelt addressing the Congress of the U.S.A. on Jan. 6, 1941

An American ambulance station was hit during a severe air raid, and women ambulance drivers are seen above examining the damage.

Americans living in this country have formed their own Home Guard and work in conjunction with British units. They train under realistic conditions, and are seen advancing through a smoke screen, right.

Photos, Planet News and Wide World

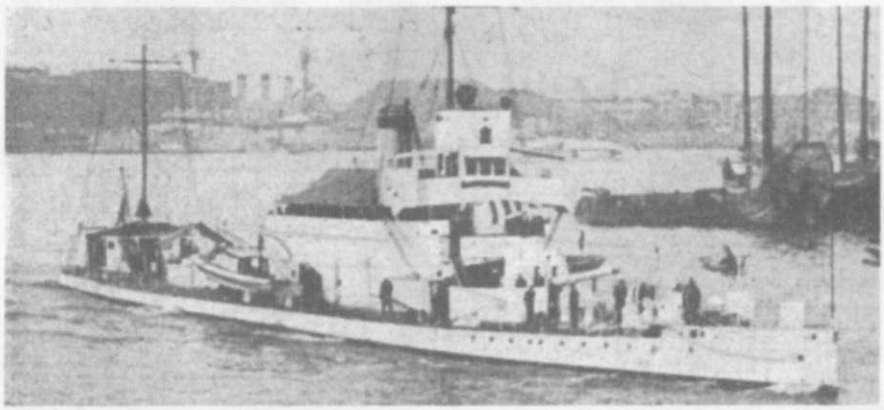
One of the many ways in which the citizens of the U.S.A. have shown practical sympathy with Britain has been by voluntarily giving their blood for transfusions. The blood, specially treated, has been sent to Britain in bottles. A patient (above) is seen at St. Thomas's Hospital, London, receiving a transfusion.

Photo, Associated Press

The 'Terror' Lived Up to Her Name off Libya

As the Army of the Nile rumbled and roared across the Western Desert, ships of the Mediterranean Fleet demoralized and destroyed the Italian forces which lay in its path. Among the ships which took part in the bombardment were the monitor "Terror" and the gunboats "Aphis" and "Ladybird"; it is their contribution to the great victory which is described below.

Six times the Rome wireless claimed to have sunk the British monitor "Terror," as during the operations along the North African coast between Sidi Barrani and Bardia she and her two accompanying gunboats, "Aphis" and "Ladybird," came close inshore and sprayed the Italian positions and columns of marching troops with their guns. Bombers and torpedo-carrying aircraft swept down upon them night after night, and once they were attacked by an E-boat. But the little ships survived every assault and they arrived back safely at their base in Egypt when they had seen the Union Jack hoisted over Government House in Bardia.



TWO RIVER GUNBOATS came from Chinese waters to take part in the bombardment of Bardia. They were the "Ladybird," above, and the "Aphis," belonging to a class of nine 625-ton river gunboats built in 1915 for operations in Chinese waters. Their draught of less than 4 ft. enables them to come close enough inshore to bring their two 6-in. guns into action.
Photo, Associated Press

Beginning with the attack on Fort Maktila early in December, the three ships were almost continuously engaged until the surrender of Bardia. While the main battle fleet was occupied elsewhere, these shallow-draft vessels were able to keep up a continuous harassing of the Italian positions. The "Terror" alone poured nearly 600 tons of 15-inch high explosive shells into Bardia while the place was still resisting. She also sprayed the coast road with devastating results: "Hellfire Corner" was blown away with a direct hit, and so, too, was a 150-yard stretch of the escarpment. "One day," said a lieutenant when the "Terror" had returned to port, "we were off the coast near Bardia. We spotted a big column of troops and lorries, so we loaded up. We sprayed that road for five miles and we smashed up the whole convoy, which, prisoners told us later, was a vital food convoy for Bardia. After that rations were short and the men said they got no food for five days."

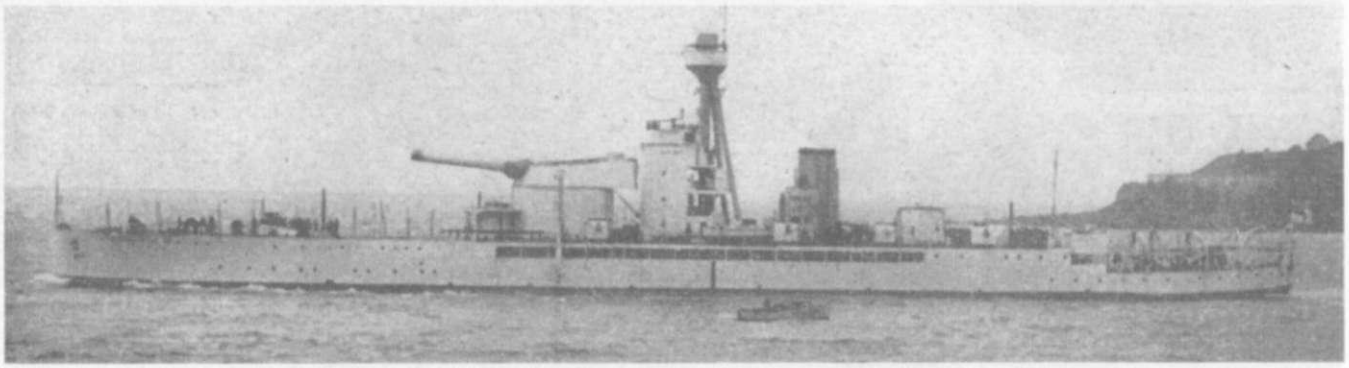
"On another occasion," went on the lieutenant, "we spotted whole clusters of motor transport moving across open country towards the port. We fired and saw them turn in another direction. We kept chasing them round and round, getting hit after hit until the whole lot had stopped. Then the dust haze hid them."

The story was taken up by a gunnery officer. "One day off Sollum," he said, "we picked on the coast road, zigzagging up an escarpment. Our first shell tore out a piece at least 200 yards long. The whole road, zigzags and all, crumbled down the cliff side. Prisoners told us that our 15-inchers often cleared an area of 600 yards radius, making a terrific shower of splinters of rock and iron."

One day they found a target in a mass of motor transport in Wadi Rahab, near Bardia. An observer in a spotting 'plane described what the "Terror's" bombardment looked like from the air. "I could see a mechanized column moving up towards the cross-roads. There were tanks among them and troop carriers. Our 15-inchers were so terrific that I could hear them above the noise of the engine. The first few ranging shots threw up great mushrooms of earth and smoke. Still there were rifts through which I could see the column moving. When I had given my directions a salvo arrived smack on the column. I signalled O.K. and another and another came. Nine successive salvos found that column. Before the Wadi became a mass of turbulent smoke and dust, I had seen tanks and lorries flung into the air like straw in the wind. Then I could not see anything more, not even the shape of the Wadi."

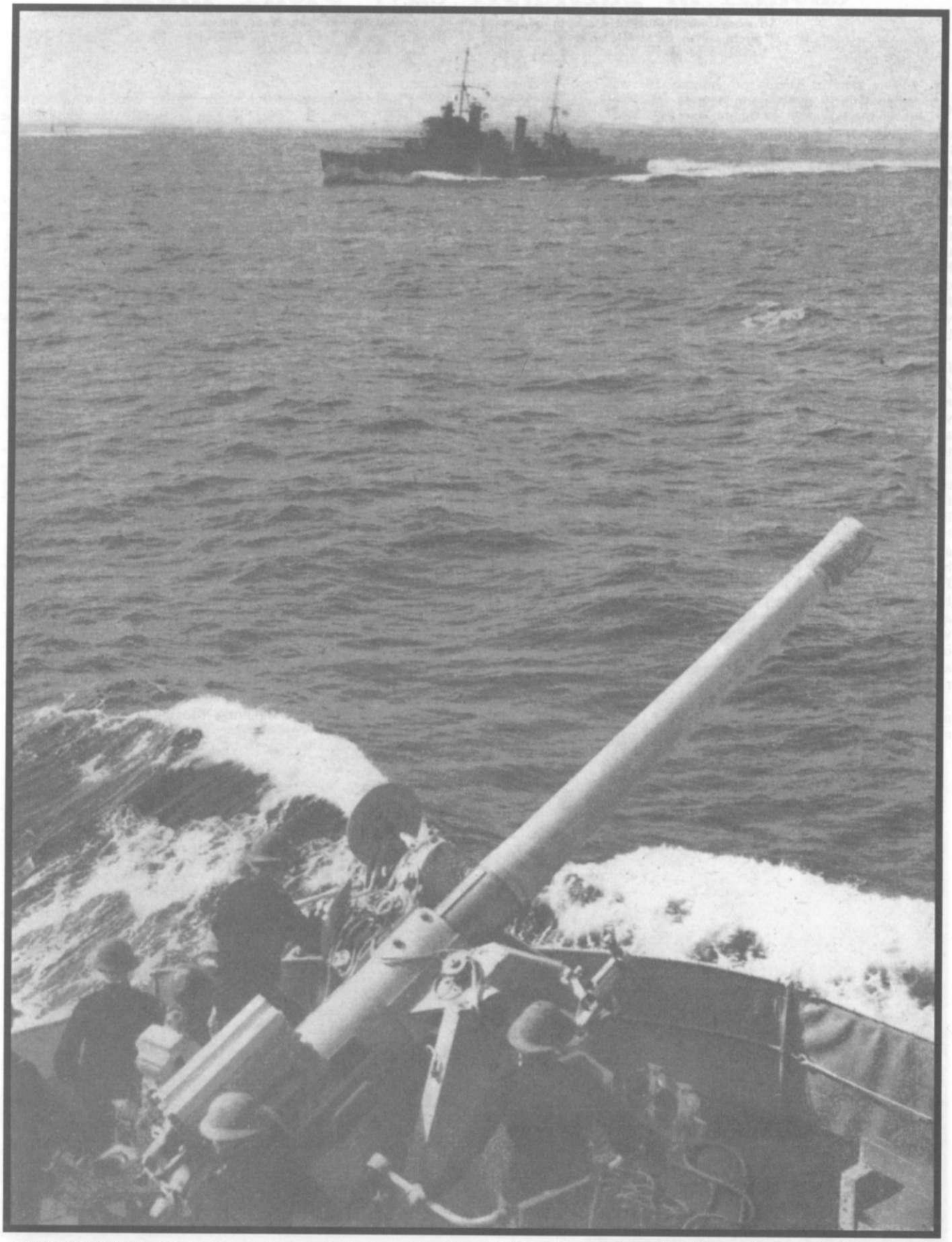
Time after time, as mentioned above, the three ships were attacked by Italian 'planes and torpedo-bombers. "Once the torpedoes were so thick in the water that we could almost knit them," said an officer of the "Terror", "we were constantly forced to swerve to right and left. Even so, one torpedo passed 20 feet from the stern." On one occasion 10 bombers escorted by about 40 fighters bombed the ships heavily, seeing that they were unprotected by fighters; next about five came over, then three delivered an attack, and finally four. "There were some near misses, one load of bombs straddling our stern, others sending huge columns of water up either side of us. But fortunately we escaped a direct hit. No fewer than 12 times have these fellows tried to get us." Yet the only casualties were in the "Aphis," caused by a near miss from the land batteries.

On the day before the big ships of the Mediterranean Fleet smashed Bardia's defences into pulp, the "Terror" and the two gunboats bombarded the town and the roads which led into it. The Italian shore batteries replied, but they were soon silenced by the "Terror's" heavy guns, so enabling the "Aphis" and "Ladybird" to get close into shore, creating havoc among the shipping in the harbour. But throughout the attack the "Terror's" gunner took good care not to hit the lighthouse at Bardia since "it was so handy for getting our range!"



H.M.S. "TERROR," veteran monitor of the last war, was also amongst the ships that took part in the bombardment of Bardia. She was completed in August 1916, and, with many other monitors, was employed in the shallow waters of the North Sea against the German positions on the Belgian coast. With a draught of only 11 feet, yet carrying two 15-in. and eight 4-in. guns, this 7,200-ton monitor was able to come close inshore off Bardia, as twenty-three years ago she had done off the sand dunes around Ostend, and helped to plaster the Italian stronghold with a rain of high explosives.
Photo, Topical

Watch and Ward O'er the Seven Seas



CEASELESS PATROL of the high seas is kept up, day in, day out, by ships of the Royal Navy which guard our shores, strive to make the seas safe for our merchant shipping, escort convoys and maintain a constant watch and ward. These warships on patrol, anti-aircraft guns manned against the ever likely threat of air attack, are performing one of the routine, but none the less vital, tasks of the Silent Service.

Photo, Fox

More Laurels for the Amazing Greeks

"We begin 1941 resolved to fight to the last breath until the enemy has been exterminated." In these words General Metaxas addressed the Greek people in a New Year message. "Victories to us! Victories to our great Ally! And more than victories—heroism and glory!"

JOY-BELLS rang in Athens on January 10 when shortly after noon it was announced that Klisura had been captured by the Greeks. The people poured into the streets and gave a tremendous reception to King George and General Metaxas, who acknowledged their greetings from a balcony at the Palace. In the hospitals, too, men who had been wounded in the war, men who had lost their limbs through frostbite, raised themselves in their beds and cheered. They knew what conditions were like on the mountain battlefield; they knew, as only they could know, what difficulties had had to be overcome before the joy bells could be set a-ringing.

Klisura had been the Greeks' objective for many weeks—since, indeed, the fall of Argyrokastro in early December. It was a key town, a bastion of the defence line which the Italians had painfully constructed across mountain and gorge to bar the way to Valona and the heart of Albania. Lying in a defile and surrounded by steep cliffs it was insignificant enough as a town, but the Italians had ringed it with a threefold line of trenches and concrete emplacements, liberally provided with positions for artillery and machine-guns. Then in front of all had been arranged belts of barbed wire. Everything possible, indeed, had been done by the Italians to make the place impregnable, and the local commander issued an order which said that in view of Klisura's strategic importance any retreat would be considered as desertion, so that out of every ten men retreating one would be shot.

For weeks the Greeks battled vainly against the Italian positions in the mountains, and they had to fight, too, in the most bitter weather. Blizzards were frequent and everywhere the snow lay several feet deep, while the mountain streams were swollen into roaring torrents. Again and again the Greeks charged the Italian lines with fixed bayonets, and one by one they subdued the strong points, the machine-gun posts, the gun emplacements. The Italians fought hard, but they were fighting a losing battle—and knew it. The day came when the Greeks stormed the remaining heights and Klisura lay revealed beneath them. It was this engagement which was referred to in the communiqué issued by the Greek High Command on the night of January 9: "During local engagements today important heights were captured at the bayonet point. About 200 prisoners fell into our hands as well as much material, including twenty 81 mm. mortars." The next day the Greeks carefully made their way down the mountainside and entered the town hard on the heels of the Italians. The Albanian population swarmed out of their houses and refuges and welcomed them as liberators.

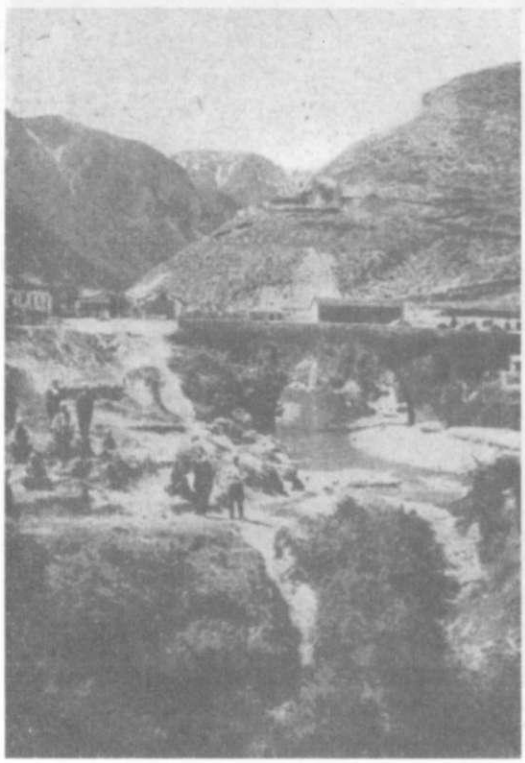
Italian Retreat on Tepelini

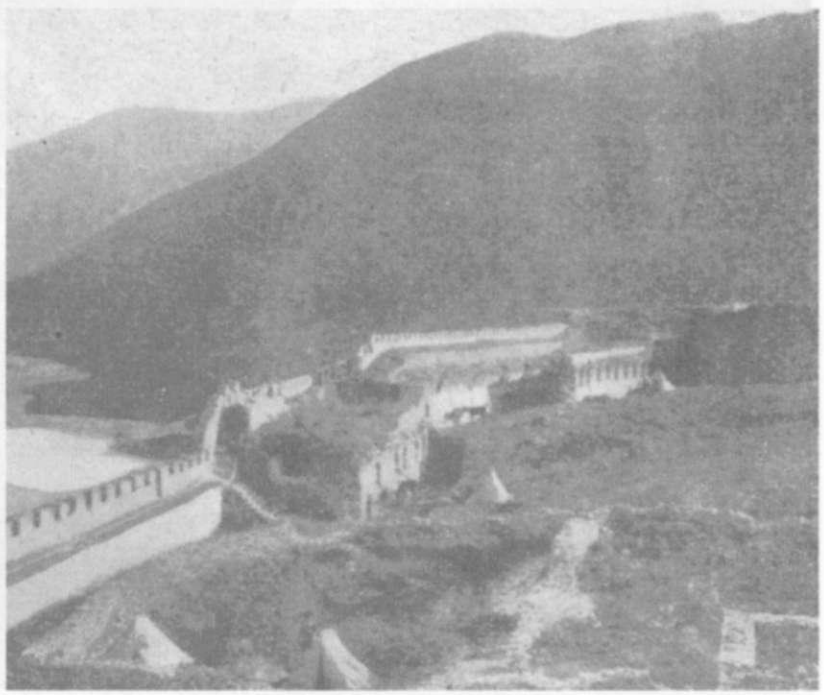
As for the Italians, they were making their way as best they could down the Viosa valley to Tepelini, which was now, as the result of Klisura's fall, elevated into the position of the Greeks' main objective. Their retreat was hampered by the fire of the Greek patrols, who took advantage of every bend in the tortuous road, of every crag of overhanging rock which might afford cover for a sniper's rifle. Then from time to time the retreating column was bombed and machine-gunned by Allied 'planes. Another hundred or so prisoners were taken, together with much material, including mortars, machine-guns, and automatic rifles.

Tepelini, like Klisura, was one of the principal points in the new defence lines which the Italians had hoped to hold in Central Albania. Strategically, perhaps, it was of even greater importance, for the town—village, rather—is situated at the junction of the Viosa with the Drinos, along whose valley from Argyrokastro other detachments of Greeks had been pushing for some time past. Thus Tepelini was now threatened from two directions, from south and east, and only a day or two after Klisura's fall it was reported that it, too, had been captured by the Greeks. And between Tepelini and Valona there is no place where the Italians might hope to make a stand.

About this time the Italians issued their casualty list for December. It gave the number of dead in the fighting in Albania as 1,301, of whom 97 were officers, 65 N.C.O.s, and 19 Albanians. The total number of wounded was 4,598, of whom 10 were Albanians. The missing numbered 3,058, including 88 Albanians. Compared with the losses in the Great War, these figures may seem so small as to appear almost negligible; but we must have regard to the extraordinarily difficult nature of the country, militating against the use of large bodies of troops, and the terrible weather conditions, which for days at a time halted the war. But at least it may be said for the Italians in Albania that they put up an infinitely better fight than their comrades in Libya.

To the Greeks, then, all the more honour for their amazing performance in driving the Italians— Mussolini's crack troops included—from their mountain fastnesses.





KLISURA and TEPELINI are key-points in the Albanian war. Left is the bridge over the river Viosa at Klisura. Above, the ruined castle at Tepelini of Ali Pasha. Known as the Lion of Janina, he lived from 1741 to 1822 and by his ruthlessness, rose from the brigand he was in his early days to become pasha of Janina. *Photos, E.N.A.*

Again There Was Rejoicing in Athens

An enthusiastic group of Greek soldiers is seen before leaving for the front. The advance of the Greek Army in all sectors of the Albanian campaign was maintained in the face of tremendous difficulties, reflecting great credit on the men and their leaders.

GENERAL PAPAGOS, Greek C.-in-C., talks to a wounded officer in hospital. The officer is a member of the Evzones, the famous kilted Greek soldiers, and was wounded in the battle of Koritza. A Greek casualty (right) responds to the cheers of his comrades as he is carried on a stretcher.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; and Black Star

Ye Mariners of England! Whose Flag Has Bra ed a Thousand Year

Ack-Ack on Target! How the Gunners Go To It

As a rule the non-gunner knows little of the practice and problems of anti-aircraft gunnery, now of such vital importance to Britain's defence. This article, written by a former member of our staff who is now an Artillery officer, is an attempt to present some of these in clear language, although it is impossible to touch on more than the fringe of so vast and technical a subject.

WITHIN the Anti-Aircraft Command of the Royal Artillery—itself the largest single corps in the British Army—are all the A.A. guns, both of heavy and of light calibre, and all the searchlight units. The latter were at one time under the Engineers, but are now all "Gunners." This A.A. Command, therefore, has charge of everything (on land) that hurls defiance at the raider, from a 4·5-in. to a Lewis gun, and has been expanded and expanded until its ill-equipped nucleus, as it was in the early 'thirties, or even at the time of "Munich," seems a mere plaything. Its G.O.C. is Lt.-Gen. Sir Frederick Pile.

The anti-aircraft gunner has an exceptionally difficult task—far more so than the layman realizes—and a ceaseless one. All over the country, and mostly far from home, are these groups of men who, for over a year, have been on three or four minutes' notice to come into action. The inaction that is the temporary bane of most of our home-based troops can now be the lot of few A.A. units. The gunner's recompense is that his science, unlike some of his weapons, is never static. New theories, new developments, new "drills" arise in a constant flow, with experience of the air war now fluctuating over Britain. Yet the basic principles of what one may call "predicted" shooting (the term will be explained later) remain unaltered.

The essence and the limitation is that the guns are laid and fired on a "future position" in space where the fleeting target will be if it continues on its present course, at the same height and speed. It will be appreciated that, especially with heavy guns, where handling cannot be so rapid, it is most necessary to register a hit with the first salvo. Moreover, everything must be not only ready but steady—including the nerves of everyone on the gun position. It is truly a case where an ounce of practice is worth a pound of theory.

A typical "heavy" gun site may have an equipment of 3·7-in. guns, placed so as to command as wide a view and field of fire as is practicable, with due thought to concealment of the position with the aid of camouflage.

Let us imagine what will happen here on an alarm being sounded—in clear daylight, for a night "shoot" is a different proposition, with the added complication of the aid afforded by the searchlight men, equipped with their powerful projectors and delicate sound locators.

The alarm is probably broadcast by 'phone to the "signallers," who are always on duty in the Command Post dug-out. This little underground room is the real hub of everything "operational" on the site. Though the G.P.O.—in ack-ack language; the Gun Position Officer—retains a large measure of initiative (and a responsibility very big for one who may be only a junior "sub"), it is over the Command Post 'phone that instructions and information come from a control operations-room.

A hostile raid, then, is definitely plotted on the large map in the dug-out as approaching our gun-site, and the alarm is sounded.

Our guns are 3·7-in. of the mobile or static type—that is to say, some may be bedded down in permanent concrete establishments, while others can be moved. A 3·7-in. does not sound (on paper) a heavy weapon when compared to the 15-and 16-in. weapons of our battleships, but it is a gun that looks solid and good, has a satisfying bark, and its effectiveness has been proved "to the hilt."

Manning each of these guns and at their post when the No. 1 reports "ready for action" are the detachment, and we may enumerate some of their duties. First, each man is responsible for certain items when equipment is examined—a daily routine—but the No. 1, who is in charge and usually a Sergeant (though he may be a Bombardier, the R.A. equivalent of a Corporal), is responsible to the G.P.O. for his gun.

There are other layers on the right, with the traversing gear, and on the left with the elevating handwheel. Presuming that we have mechanical fuse-setters, the setter also sits in front of a dial, and ensures that the correct fuse length is set at any moment in action. On the platform facing the gun is the gunner who opens or closes the breech as required—though the modern semi-automatic mechanism eliminates this in action—and he actually fires the gun. This he does by pulling the firing lever to the rear.

These duties, as already described, are basically the same on all types of heavy A.A. guns, but the remainder differ in detail. There are also ramming and loading tray numbers, while the rest of the detachment (never "crew" or "team") are concerned with supplying ammunition either from the recesses round the gun or from magazines. Not that these men are negligible in their duties - very far from it. The weight of a round is itself daunting enough, and "ammo"

ANTI-AIRCRAFT UNITS are being continually called upon to perform extraordinarily difficult tasks, for the enemy is constantly evolving new tactics in his air war against Britain. Changing methods of aerial attack upon our towns and cities are ceaselessly challenged by the A.A. gunners. Here are some of them running to man their gun during an Alert.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

LT.-GEN. SIR F. PILE has been G.O.C. Anti-Aircraft Defences since 1939. He served with distinction in the last war, and at one time commanded the 1st Anti-Aircraft Division, T.A.
Photo, Topical

Behind the Scenes at a Daytime 'Shoot'

numbers in action have a really responsible "he-man" job.

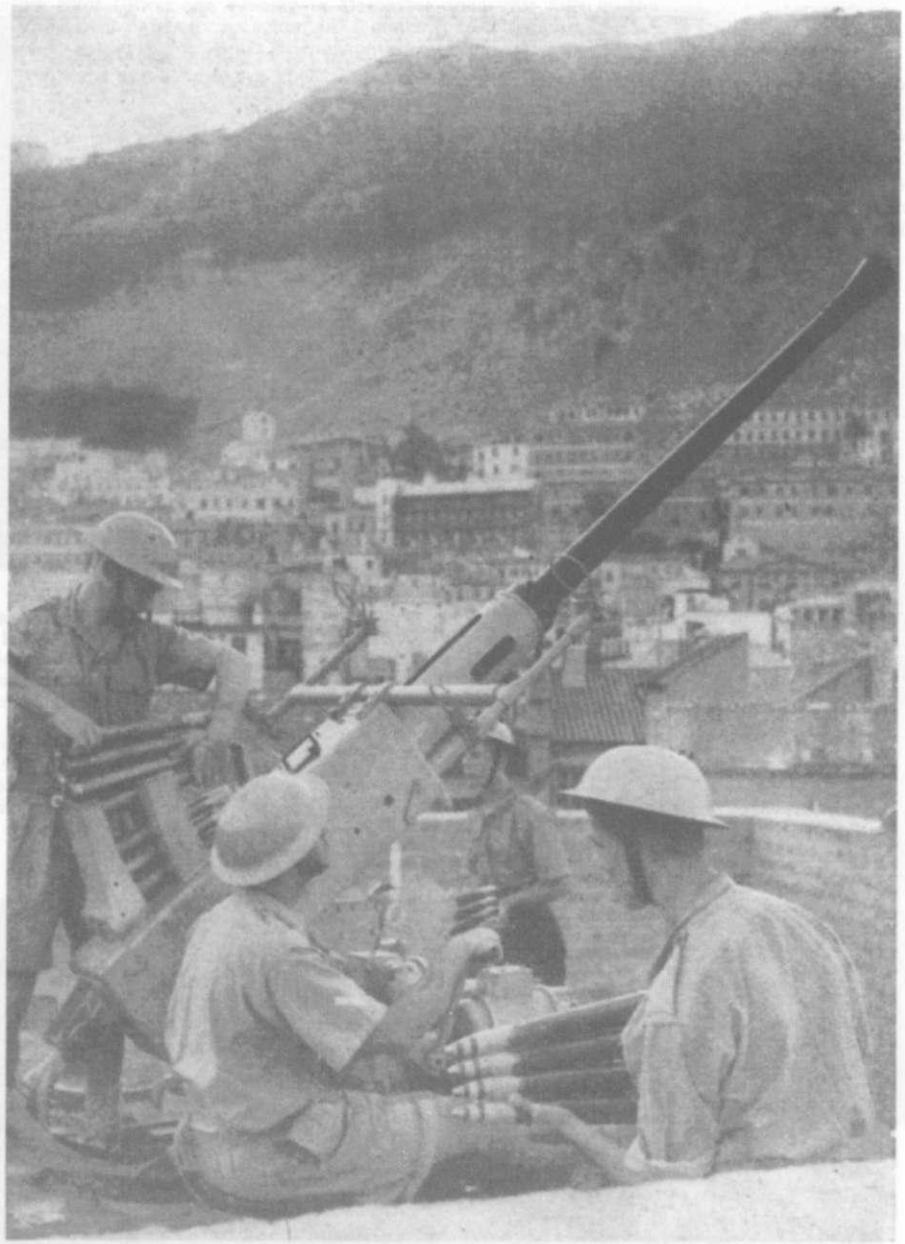
The ammuntion used consists, of course, of "fixed" rounds—that is, the fuse, the shell and the propellant charge (with the primer in the base) built up together in one piece. The fuse in the nose can be set by hand with a key, to alter the time taken for the powder or clockwork mechanism within to explode the shell after it has been fired.

Our 3·7-in.s, then, have reported "ready for action." On the Command Post the spotters are observing with their telescope, and the men on the other instruments are also waiting, with steel helmets adjusted and respirators at the alert, for the "Jerry" that is their lawful victim.

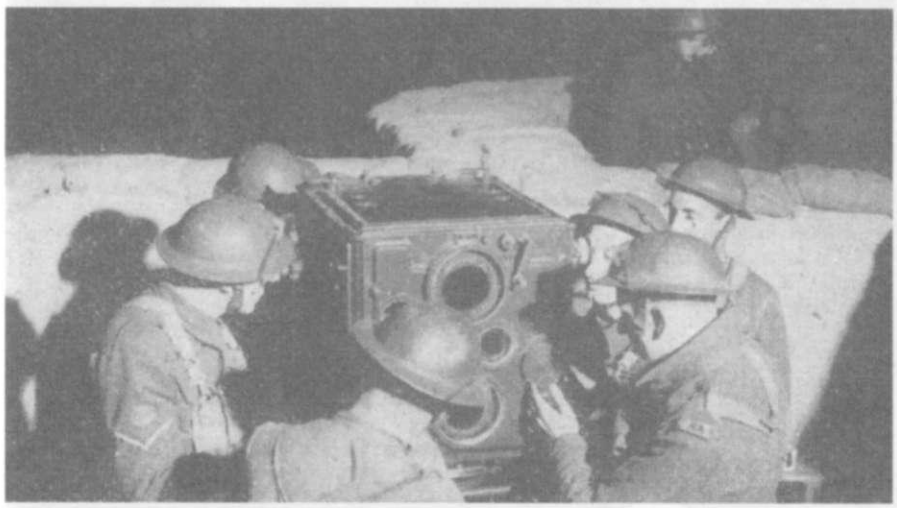
What are these other instruments? First, the predictor, and, secondly, the height-finder. The predictor, like a box with its side panels crammed with dials and hand-wheels, is one of the most ingenious machines yet devised by military scientists, for though it requires several men of intelligence, who must work as a team to get results, it does predict exactly what we want—the future position of the target; and these "future" data (Q.E. or quadrant elevation, bearing, and in some cases fuse length) are transmitted electrically direct to dials on the guns.

Though much else—ballistic, human, and mechanical—enters into it, two things only are basically necessary for this *tour de force:* that the layers on the predictor will (unlike those on the guns) follow the target visually with great accuracy and smoothness, and that an accurate height is set in from the heightfinder—a specialized version of the artillery rangefinder, in that the range to the target is calculated first by optical means, and from it an accurate height can be deduced trigonometrically.

Our target is now coming into range, and the Section is ready for action. This report is made by the G.P.O.'s assistant, or "G.P.O. Ack," a functionary who needs quick brains, a voice, and a megaphone. Suddenly a spotter reports "Spotter on Target," and the G.P.O. Ack runs to the telescope and reads off the bearing and angle of sight to the other instruments. The G.P.O. looks in the telescope, identifies the target as hostile,



Enemy 'planes get a lively reception when they attempt to attack Gibraltar. The famous Rock is well protected, for as a British naval base it is of paramount importance. Here an anti-aircraft crew is manning one of the powerful Bofors A.A. guns. *Photo, Topical*



THE PREDICTOR, the box-shaped instrument at which men are seen working in this night photograph, is an ingenious machine for estimating the position in space of a hostile aircraft at a given moment. That now used by Britain's defenders is described as being an "absolute killer." The instrument is manned by a team who work in conjunction with the heightfinder and gunlayers, as explained in this page. *Photo, Fox*

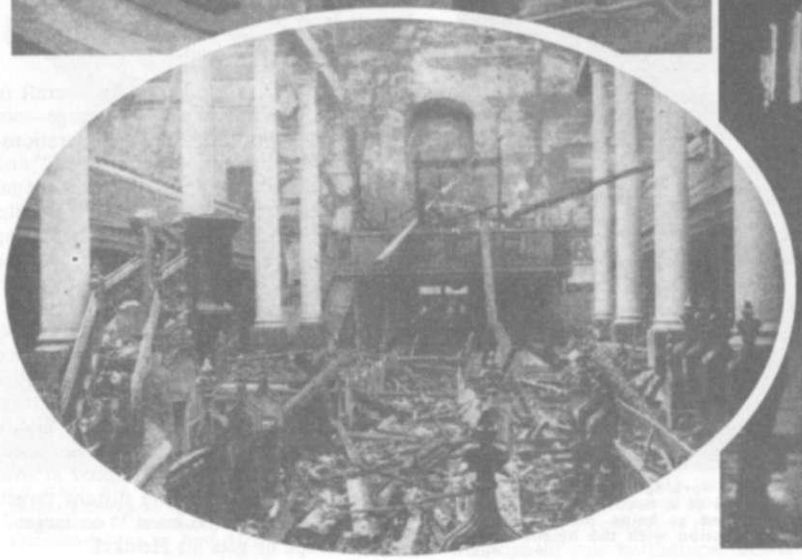
ensures that there are no friendly aircraft in the vicinity, and decides to engage—not forgetting to report back to the operations-room. The instruments get "on target," and a first height is called from the heightfinder and set in the predictor. The layers and the Nos. 4 on the guns are smoothly following the electrical pointers on their dials, and the predictor is reported steady. The target is swiftly approaching the "crossing point."

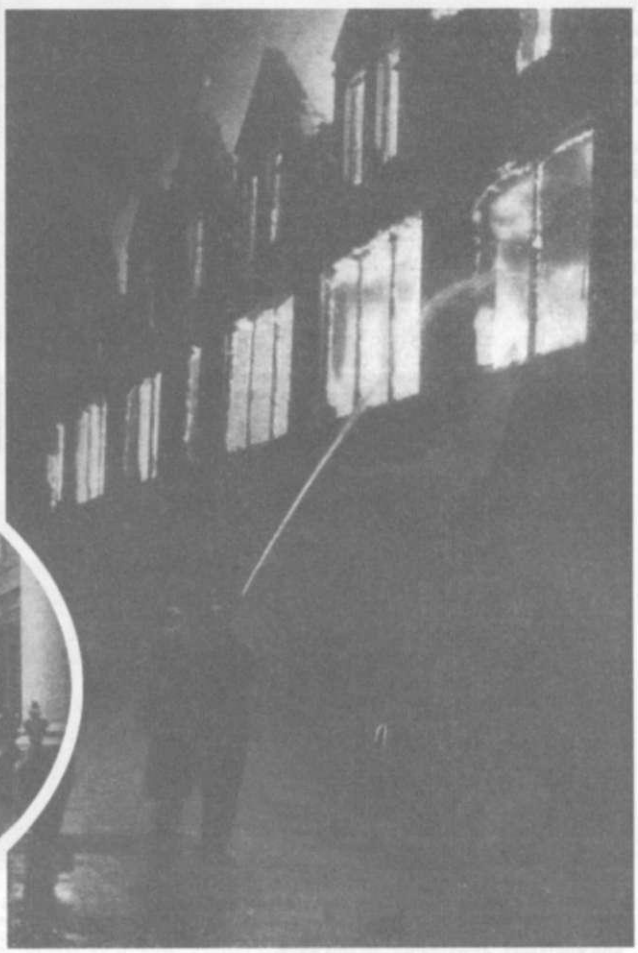
"Fire!" The rounds are put in the fuse-setting machines, these are set and passed like lightning to the loading trays: the trays are over, the rounds are rammed, the trays are back, and the guns fire as one. Simultaneously they recoil, ejecting the spent cartridge cases, and the shells speed at over 2,000 feet per second to the distant target. The G.P.O. observes the burst "on target"—and we hope he gets his Heinkel.

Cardiff and Liverpool Have Their Scars

SEVERAL savage raids were made by enemy bombers on provincial cities and towns in England and Wales during December 1940, and among those to suffer severely were Liverpool and Cardiff. Left is St. Nicholas' Church, Pierhead, Liverpool (known as the Seamen's Church from its dedication to the patron saint of sailors), after it had been burned out during one of the raids ; the interior is shown in the oval below. At Cardiff many bombs fell on working men's homes in the outskirts. In the photograph above a stretcher-party is carrying away a casualty; below is one of Cardiff's burning buildings.

Photos, Topical and "Daily Mirror"





Meet One of the 'Nits': a Pilot in the Making

Broadcast by an Acting Pilot Officer one evening in December 1940, this talk on the training of a "Nit" is printed here as a very human document, describing a phase of experience which cannot but interest deeply all who admire our magnificent airmen.

IT'S several months now since a very Junior Acting Pilot Officer first put on, perhaps a bit self-consciously, a very new R.A.F. uniform, and admired himself in a mirror. I remember how naked he thought the uniform looked without the pilot's wings over the left top pocket, and how he wore his greatcoat on every possible occasion to cover up that enormous gap of blue cloth where, one day, he hoped wings would grow.

Well, today that uniform isn't quite so new, and its wearer perhaps not quite so self-conscious; but he still puts on the greatcoat, even on a sunny day, because those wings aren't there yet. In a few weeks maybe—but, at the moment they're—well, shall we call it?—semi-sprouting.

Discipline is Good for You!

When I first joined the Service I was plunged into something which I didn't think I was going to like very much. It was called a disciplinary course and, being a very undisciplined sort of person, I approached it in a "nasty medicine" sort of way—with a "I know this is going to do me good but all the same I don't want to take it" sort of attitude. But I must say I rather enjoyed it. I was taught how to march instead of slouch; how to be drilled and to drill, and, very important, how, when, where, and whom to salute. After the first few hours of this I realized that there was a higher art on the barrack square. This surprised me; it was rather like finding out at the age of twelve that rice pudding is really quite palatable. But it was so—as anyone who has ever seen the awful muddles resulting from giving, say, the command "Halt" on the *left* instead of on the *right* foot, will appreciate.

By the time I could get a squad on the move, and halt it again without having everyone falling over everyone else's feet, I was posted to an E.F.T.S. I became, in fact, a pupil pilot—or, in other words, a "Nit"—the derivation of this term is obvious, and, in most cases, I fear—all too justified. It certainly was in mine.

An E.F.T.S. is an Elementary Flying Training School, and there I joined in with a lot of other pupil pilots who had just come from an Initial Training Wing. There they had already had instruction in several useful things like Morse, and navigation and armament—which put them a bit up on me because I did not know a "da" from a "dit" at Morse, or a Browning breech-block from a sewing-machine shuttle.

The main job of the E.F.T.S. was to teach us to fly. But, in the case of people like me, who thought they could fly a bit already, instructors had a double job to do—first showing us that we couldn't fly, and then teaching us the right, proper, official and R.A.F. way. My instructor was a very tough and exceedingly competent Flight Lieutenant, with that odd mixture of patience and explosiveness which forced his pupils to keep on their best performance all the time they were flying with him. I shall not forget his remark to me on my first bit of dual. He told me to do some turns. I pushed the aeroplane round to the right in my most polished manner. Silence from the front cockpit. So I pushed her round to the left. Still silence. I sat and waited. There came, in my earphones, a long, over-patient sigh—and then a gentle voice: "You may call those turns, laddie, but, as far as I'm concerned, they're just changes of direction."

The machines we flew at E.F.T.S. were Tiger Moths—open cockpit biplanes of great stability and little speed. We grew to love them; they were such very forgiving aeroplanes. The one I flew mostly (old 84) forgave me many things: crooked loops, bad sideslips, flat turns, bump landings—so much, in fact, that when my flying got a bit better and 84 had less to put up with, I felt like giving her a lump of sugar or an extra ration of oil in return for past favours.

Here is a typical cadet at one of the Flying Training Schools. The examination for physical fitness which future pilots and observers have to undergo is the severest that science can devise. *Photo, Planet News*

First Steps in the Air

Most of my fellow "Nits" went solo after about seven or eight hours' dual. The ordinary flying syllabus included slow rolls, stalled turns, rolls of the top of a loop, spinning at least once every two hours, and other gentle means of disturbing one's half-digested lunch; and we had also to do forced landing practices, cross-country flights and one or two other indispensable exercises. In our course only three pupils failed to make the grade, and this involved no shame on the people concerned at all. The R.A.F. is purely voluntary, and if pupils decide that they don't like flying—or that they aren't good enough—then they're at full liberty to say so, and to turn to something else. One of our instructors put it rather well when talking to a pupil who'd just been suspended. This instructor said: "There's

CADETS in the R.A.F. are returning to their quarters at one of the many training schools where thousands of young men who have volunteered for service in the air are learning to be pilots and observers. They go through much the same course of military drill as the Army and are as smart on parade as any crack regiment. *Photo, L.N.A.*

How an R.A.F. Fledgeling Grows His Wings

MAP READING plays an important part in the airman student's curriculum, and here prospective pilots are seen being given instruction by a pilot officer. *Photo, Fox*

nothing wrong in not being able to fly. What would seem wrong would be if everyone could."

Our ground work was—at least for me—pretty hard, especially the Morse. I managed to learn the code and get up to about six or seven words a minute, sending and receiving, on the buzzer. But receiving signals on the Aldis lamp foxed me completely, and in the examination I failed on the lamp—the only one on the course to do so. I am only just managing to cope with it now, after another spell of work at my present place, but I fear I shall never grow to love it. We had quite a stiff examination on our ground subjects, including navigation, airmanship, rigging, engines and armament. I got through all right, I think, but I'm still waiting for a note from the examiners to tell me that the proper answer to "What would you do if your aircraft caught fire in the air?" is not "Dial 'O.'"

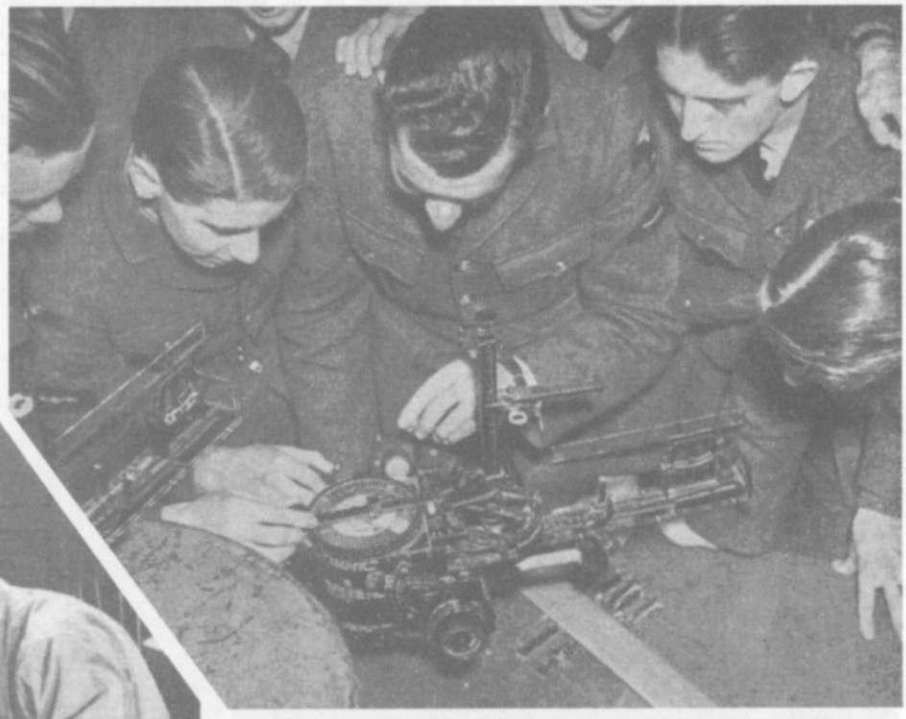
Now a word about the instructors themselves. Someone recently published a bit of verse which summed up their lives. He wrote:

> What did you do in the war, daddy?
> How did you help us to win?
> Circuits and bumps and turns, laddie,
> And how to get out of a spin.

And very true it is.

These men—experienced pilots all of them—are doing one of the R.A.F.'s greatest and most unpublicized jobs. Hours of circuits and bumps, correcting the same old faults, getting "Nits" off solo—and then seeing them go away—having their places taken by another bunch who're going to do the same silly things in the same silly way all over again. Yet, on the whole, most of them say it isn't too bad, and that they become first-rate psychologists, which probably they do.

But the real joy of an instructor's life is his collection of stories of the things "Nits" have done. There is the instructor who, to give a titled and illustrious but rather nervous pupil some more confidence in landings, held his hands above his head as the 'plane was coming in, so that the pupil could see that he alone was doing the landing. The 'plane came down, bounced, came down, bounced again and finally jolted to rest. The instructor looked angrily round, and there sat the pupil, hands held firmly above his head. "Well," he said, "you told me last time round to watch how you did things and then to do them your way, so I did!"



INTRICATE MECHANISM of a bomb-sight is being minutely examined by these young cadets who have recently arrived at their Training School. Left, absorbed in a navigational course, two cadets are hard at work in a classroom. *Photos, Sport & General and L.N.A.*

Britain's Army is the Best-equipped in Europe

Equipment for the Army is the work of thousands of women and girls in workshops all over the country. Above, in the West Country a battery of power-driven sewing-machines has been installed in a cabinet-makers' factory to produce webbing equipment. Circle, girls are making up anklets.

Raw material and metal fittings for the webbing equipment are being checked off as they are brought into the factory, left. The first haversack made was completed in 45 minutes. Above, a scene in another factory where 16,000 pairs of boots are turned out every week. *Photos, "Daily Mirror" and Sport & General*

Feeding Those Who Have Lost Their Kitchens

MOBILE CANTEENS presented by the King and Queen serve 1,300 meals to Londoners every day. The canteens go wherever they are required, and hot meals are seen being loaded into one of them at the Amberly School, Harrow Road, London, where the food is assembled for distribution to rest centres and shelters.

This Community Feeding Centre at Stroud Green, London, clearly displays its tariff on the railings, above, and schoolchildren, right, enjoy the two-course lunch provided there at sixpence a head.

Photos, "Evening News" "Daily Mirror" and Fox

ROYAL INTEREST was shown by the King and Queen in the meals served to homeless victims of air raids, when their Majesties visited Sheffield on January 3, circle. Soldiers and sailors, above, are seen at a Y.M.C.A. canteen at a London station. Ninepenny packet meals consisting of ham sandwiches, sausage roll, cake, and a bar of chocolate are popular.

I WAS THERE!

Eye Witness Stories of Episodes and Adventures in the Second Great War

'My Gunner Set Fire to a U-Boat'

The 2,473-ton Welsh collier "Sarastone" arrived in port from Lisbon at the beginning of January, 1941, following a battle with a U-boat, which left the latter disabled and on fire. The following account of this exploit by the "Sarastone's" gunner, Jim O'Neill, was told by her master, Captain John Herbert.

CAPTAIN John Herbert, of Swansea, the master of the "Sarastone," told his story on reaching port. He said:

The chief engineer came to me and explained that our boilers had blown. "We shall have to leave the convoy and take a chance on our own," he added.

Our engines would not carry us faster than two knots. So while the rest of the ships steamed on we altered course and headed for Lisbon.

I was having a nap in my cabin two days later when the second officer on the bridge shouted down the voice-pipe beside my bed: "There is something on the horizon that I don't like, sir."

When I got to the bridge I saw what appeared to be a mast about three miles distant. Then I saw it rise higher, until the streaming conning-tower of a U-boat emerged.

I put "action stations" on and swung the ship round to bring the submarine astern. But while she was still lying on our quarter she fired, the shot falling off our starboard quarter. It was a warning to stop. We kept on. The U-boat's speed was about fifteen knots, and she overhauled us rapidly for ten minutes without firing. Then, about 4,000 yards from us, she loosed a further five shots, but we held our fire. We've only a twelve-pounder, but I'd talked over with my naval gunner what we'd do in such a predicament and our plans were made.

She was getting closer and closer. I held my breath waiting for the moment when we could open fire with any hope of damaging her. Her shells were uncomfortably close.

My gunner, Jim O'Neill, is a naval pensioner who rejoined the Service as a reservist in September 1939. He was marvellous. The U-boat was about two thousand yards off when O'Neill opened fire. His first fell short but in perfect line. He fired again. A direct hit.

We all cheered. I shouted, "Go on, O'Neill, give it to him!" His second shot fell at the base of the after gun, putting it out of action and causing yellow smoke to rise in a cloud. Our third and fourth shots were near misses, but the fifth burst 20 feet abaft the first hit, and the yellow smoke now turned black. The U-boat was still firing back, with only one gun.

Then we steamed on. I had orders not to risk my cargo.—"*Daily Express.*"

Gunner James O'Neill, hero of the collier "Sarastone," made his first direct hit on the U-boat with his second shot.
Photo, Associated Press

'We're Sitting On 100 Italians!'

The lighter side of war was amusingly illustrated by the story of how the Italians lost the only British prisoners they had captured in the Western Desert battle. This story was recounted by the captain of an Australian destroyer which took part in the "rescue" of the British prisoners from an Italian ship off Libya.

A BRITISH sergeant, a corporal and seven men were captured in Libya early on Christmas morning while patrolling a dry river-bed. The captives belonged to a well-known British regiment and were apparently much prized, as at least four Italian generals came to look at them.

Then they were put on the 100-ton schooner "Zingarella." On December 29 the little prison ship set sail for Tobruk. Darkness fell and a storm got up. The schooner, with 100 Italian soldiers and 15 naval ratings, and their nine precious prisoners in the hold, hugged the Libyan coast.

An Australian destroyer was patrolling the enemy coast that night, and at 2 a.m. she sighted a small vessel directly ahead.

Telling his story later the captain of the destroyer said:

We immediately eased towards her, being unable at that time to determine whether she was a submarine or some other type of warcraft. We fired a single round over the top. The vessel stopped her engines, and we put a searchlight on her.

We were both rolling so heavily that I kept about 20 yards away, but in the beams of the searchlight I could see the hold full of very green-looking Italians. Others were waving shirts, or anything white they could find, and shouting in chorus, "Prigionieri Inglesi" (English prisoners).

I yelled through the megaphone in answer. The weather was too rough to lower a boat. Then I saw a British sergeant make a flying dash through the exit of the hatchway. He bowled over the Italian guards, and then was followed by eight other British soldiers.

Apparently he had guessed, on hearing our shot, that help was at hand, and had nipped out of the hold with great presence of mind to turn the tables on his captors. Even as we were talking he got the 100 Italians battened down in the hold. They were so completely seasick that I don't think they cared at all who won the war.

The destroyer's captain saw the sergeant take over the schooner from unresisting deck hands. The captain continued:

I called out, "Sergeant, have you got the situation in hand?" and though he could hardly maintain his feet on the heaving deck, he replied, "Yes, sir, and 100 Italians are below. We're sitting on them."

I instructed the sergeant to tell the captain of the schooner to follow us. He replied, "I'll see to that, sir."

Then we began our tedious journey back. In response to anxious inquiries about our progress I had sent a signal explaining that the "Zingarella" was no ocean greyhound.

The remarkable escape of the pilot, observer and gunner of an R.A.F. bomber when their 'plane was damaged during a raid on an Albanian port is told in Vol. III, page 667. This photograph, recently received in London, shows the pilot, left, with one of the crew after their return to their base in Greece.
Photo. British Official: Crown Copyright

I WAS THERE!

We Made Quite a Mess of Mannheim

Mannheim, the industrial and commercial centre of south-west Germany, was raided by the R.A.F. four times in eight nights in December 1940. An account of one of these raids was broadcast by a Squadron Leader who took part in it, and his story is given below in his own words.

THE Squadron Leader in a heavy bomber squadron who told the story of a raid on Mannheim holds the D.F.C. for his work in an attack on Munich. He said:

The operation against Mannheim in which I took part was on a pretty big scale; aircraft from a number of squadrons were operating. The general idea was to send in the early ones with incendiaries so as to light up the target, then for the main force to come along with heavy stuff. The operations of the main force incidentally were spread over a period of six or seven hours. We left at regular intervals. It was important to keep strictly to the scheduled take-off times because of working in with other stations, so as to make the bombing a more or less non-stop affair once it started.

Just when we were due to get away it started raining cats and dogs. One could see just a few blurs of light indicating the flare-path and that was all—rather like driving a car in heavy rain without a windscreen wiper, only more so. However, we got off all right. The cloud base was at a thousand feet, and we had to climb up to get through it. We were climbing rather slowly, too, because we were carrying a heavy load. Once we got above the clouds we were in bright moonlight and the navigator got his sextant out and started taking Astro sights to check up our position. We flew on, keeping straight and level. Then, 50 miles inside the Dutch coast the cloud cleared and we saw the ground for the first time since we'd taken off.

Altogether, it was a very uneventful trip out. In Germany they'd had a fall of snow, which was quite a help to navigation. When you have a light fall, as this was, the important things—woods and rivers, lakes and towns and villages—all stand out much clearer, and so, with the moon very bright, we pin-pointed ourselves quite easily as we went along.

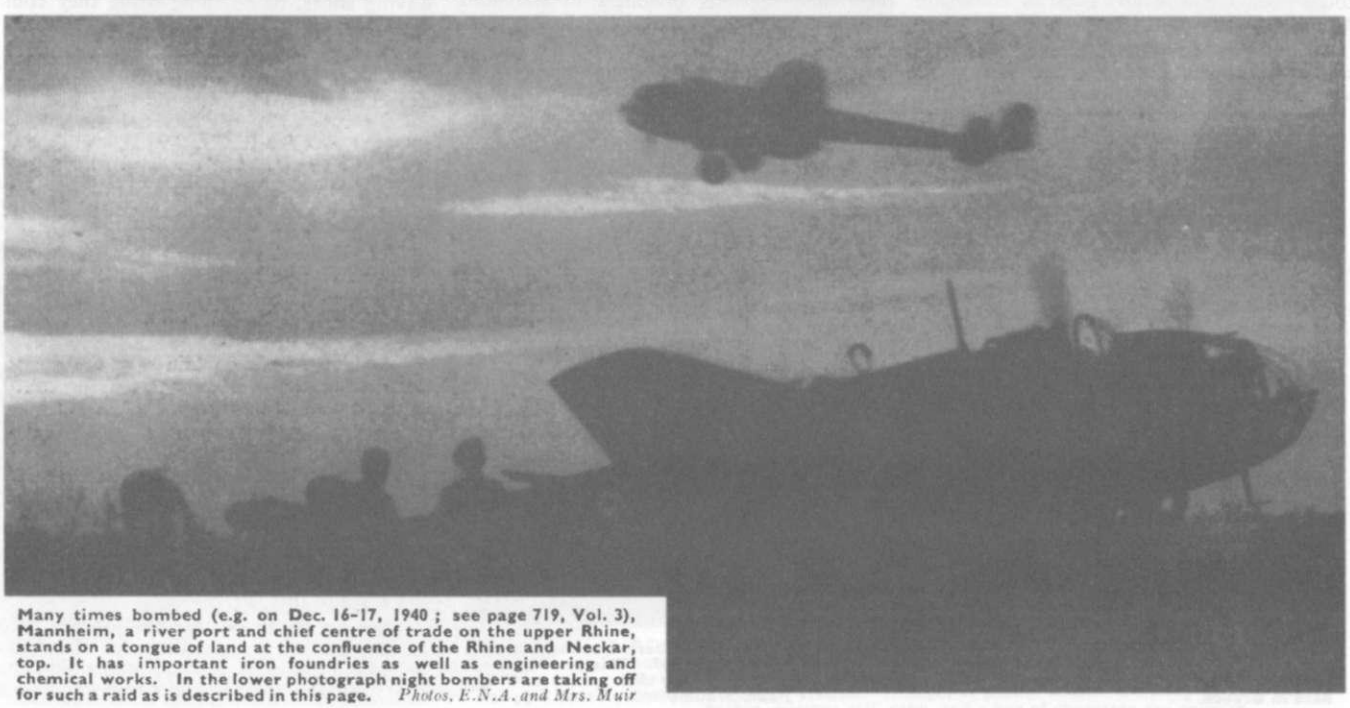
We were some distance from Mannheim when the front gunner reported heavy "flak" ahead. We were then about ten minutes away, heading straight for it, and we knew it must be Mannheim. The stuff was coming up in bursts and then dying away, then breaking up again, spasmodically.

I told the navigator to prepare for bombing, and he came up into the bomb-aimer's position in the nose of the aircraft with his map. Having done that, he had to check up on the bomb-switches, select his bombs, and we determined the length of the stick. One can drop a widely spaced stick or a close one; this time I had decided on a very close one.

As we approached I could see fires already well under way, and it was obvious that the blitz was in full swing. We picked up the Rhine, followed the river, and then started to take avoiding action because there was quite a lot of "flak," mostly light stuff, coming up. When it gets like that, one just goes through it, doing evasive stuff. I don't think "flak" deters any of the fellows from carrying out the job.

As we got a bit closer the navigator called out "Ready," and I levelled out and opened the bomb doors. You only do that at the last minute because when they are open it makes the aircraft drag a bit, so you open the throttles a little to compensate the slight loss of speed. You tell the navigator, "Bomb doors open, master switch on," and he repeats that back to you. He will probably make a few corrections to course—"Left, left, right, right, steady"—and when he's bombed he calls out "bombs off."

As a matter of fact you can feel the bombs go. You get a slight lift in the aircraft and it immediately becomes more lively. On this occasion everything went normally, and as soon as the bomb-aimer said "O.K., sir, bombs burst," I put the aircraft into a steep turn to let the crew have a look. There were three groups of huge red fires burning down below and spirals of heavy black smoke rising above the town. The fires were increasing in intensity all the time. Then we set course for home; we could see other people bombing as we came away. I told my rear gunner, as I always do, to note the time when we could no longer see the fires, and we were about sixty miles away when he called out and said he'd lost them.

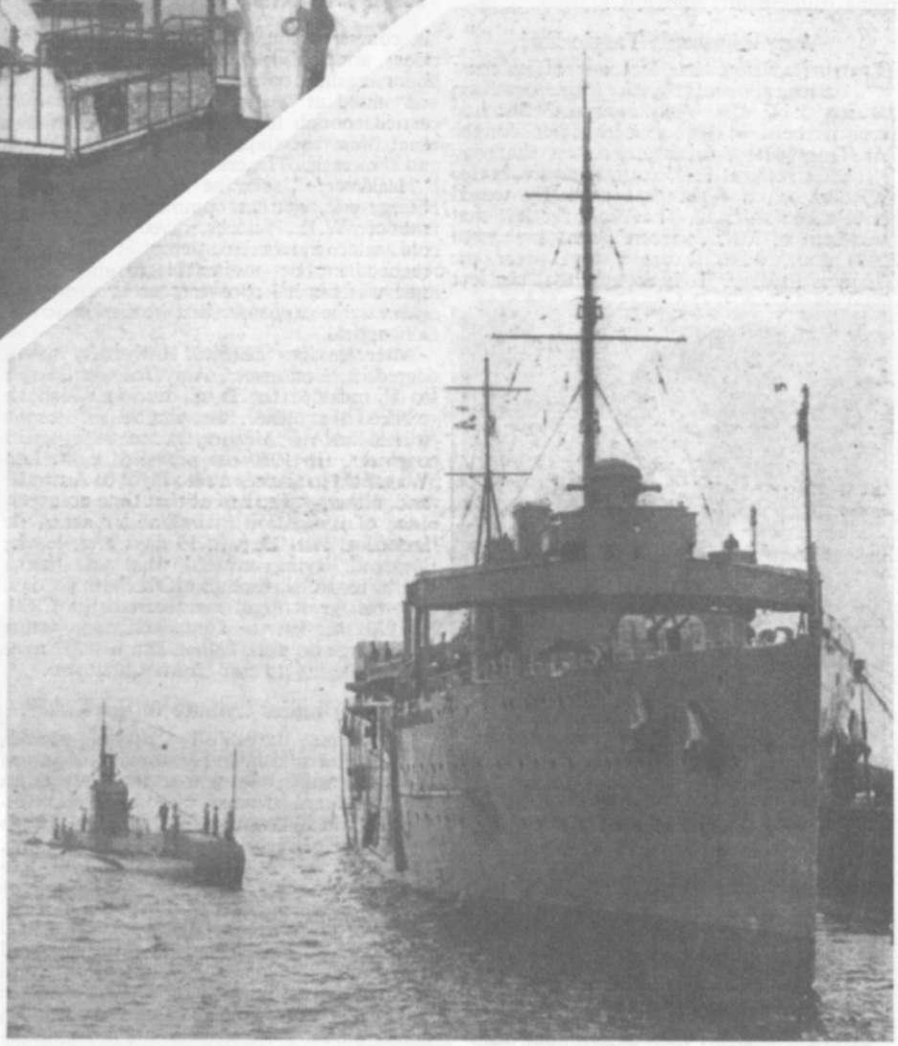


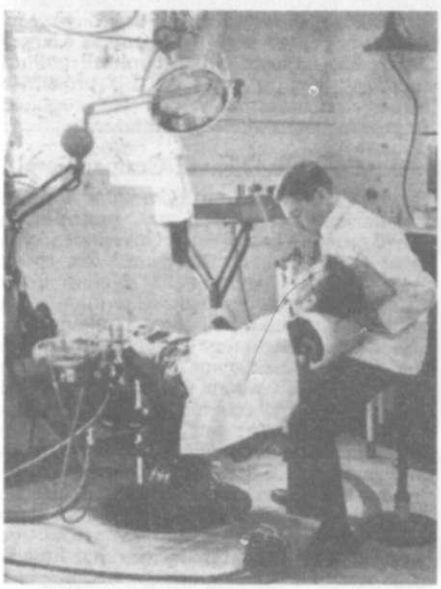
Many times bombed (e.g. on Dec. 16-17, 1940; see page 719, Vol. 3), Mannheim, a river port and chief centre of trade on the upper Rhine, stands on a tongue of land at the confluence of the Rhine and Neckar, top. It has important iron foundries as well as engineering and chemical works. In the lower photograph night bombers are taking off for such a raid as is described in this page. *Photos, E.N.A. and Mrs. Muir*

She 'Mothers' Submarines and Their Crews

Submarine crews enjoy a welcome respite from duty in this comfortable recreation room on H.M.S. "Forth," their depot ship. The petty officer (circle) looks in at the laundry during shore leave.

The finely-equipped "sick bay" aboard the "Forth" includes an operating theatre, X-ray room and dispensaries, and is a complete floating hospital. A doctor is seen with his assistants while a patient is being examined.





H.M.S. "FORTH," the Navy's latest depot ship for submarines, has accommodation for the crews of twelve vessels. The ship is a miracle of modern equipment, which comprises plant for charging submarine batteries, machine shops, foundry, plate shop and smithy, thus enabling her to undertake repair work while at sea. Submarine crews live in special quarters aboard the parent ship when in port. Left, a patient is seen in the up-to-date dental surgery, and above, a submarine comes alongside the depot ship.

Photos, Central Press and G.P.U.

OUR SEARCHLIGHT ON THE WAR

Incitement to Spying in Norway

FOLLOWING the established practice in Dictator-run countries, the Chief of Police in Oslo, who rejoices in the name of Jonas Lie, is endeavouring to institute a system of universal spying among the civil population in order to trace so-called political offenders. With this end in view he has issued a decree instructing all clergy, doctors, solicitors, telephone and telegraph operators, and postal staffs generally, to disregard their traditional oath of secrecy and inform against any persons expressing views contrary to those of Quisling and of Nazism. If sufficient information is not laid, and sufficient arrests forthcoming, the wretched doctors and others will themselves be liable to imprisonment. But it is unlikely that the Norwegians will fall into line with this new order, so repugnant to all sense of decency. They are skilful at evasion, tough at resisting enslavement, and very fertile in devising means of holding up their persecutors to ridicule. One apparently innocent accident was found recently to have occurred in the pages of Quisling's official organ "Fritt Folk." A eulogistic New Year's greeting to him—"Norway's symbol, standing erect and free as our cross, warm and bright as our sun, proud and strong as our eagle"—was headed by the Quislingist emblem of an eagle, but by some mischance the block had been put in upside down and the eagle was lying helplessly on its back, with the cross rising triumphantly above it.

Amy Johnson's Tragic End

BRITISH aviation has lost one of its most daring exponents by the tragic death on January 5 of Miss Amy Johnson. She had recently been working as a ferry pilot for the Air Transport Auxiliary, and on that day left the airfield at 10.45 a.m., in unfavourable weather, on a flight that normally would have taken an hour. That was the last that was seen of Miss Johnson's aeroplane until 3.30 p.m., when it came down over the Thames Estuary. It is thought that she lost her course owing to the bad weather conditions, and after flying round for several hours crashed owing to lack of petrol. It was stated at the airfield that the machine carried enough for a flight of 4¾ hours, the exact time that elapsed between the take-off and the crash. The crew of the naval trawler "Haslemere" saw the figure of the pilot baling out, and her commander, Lt.-Commander W. E. Fletcher, dived into the ice-cold water in an heroic attempt at rescue. He reached her, but was unable to support her, and was himself so overcome by exhaustion and extreme exposure that he died on arrival at hospital.

AMY JOHNSON, photographed in 1937 when she was flying as a commercial pilot, is seen alighting from the cockpit of an aeroplane on the Portsmouth-Isle of Wight service. She began to fly in 1928. *Photo, Planet News*

After leaving Sheffield University with a degree in Economics, Amy Johnson learned to fly outside the hours during which she worked in an office. She was the first woman to hold an Air Ministry licence as a ground engineer. In 1930 she prevailed upon Lord Wakefield to finance a solo flight to Australia, and, although she had at that time no experience of navigation in unfamiliar areas, she landed at Port Darwin 19 days after leaving England, having created what was then a world record by reaching Karachi in six days. For this great flight she received the C.B.E. In 1931 she flew to Japan and back, setting up records on both flights, and in 1932 made record flights to and from Capetown.

SQUADRON-LEADER A. G. MALAN, D.S.O., D.F.C. and bar, with his dog and the mascot sent from Batavia referred to in this page. Batavia is a far cry from England, but there is no part of the freedom-loving world which has not followed with admiration the epic story of the R.A.F.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Dutch Indies Tribute to the R.A.F.

A SMALL beautifully carved wooden statue of a Javanese woman, a specimen of native work, was sent to the Netherlands Spitfire Fund through the British Consul-General in Batavia as a Christmas gift to "A pilot of the R.A.F." The donor, Mr. W. A. de Vos, an elderly merchant of Bandoeng, who hoped that "it will become as dear to the new owner as it has been to me," paid an enthusiastic tribute to the Royal Air Force. "In these days of tears and mourning," he said, "when the whole world is shivering at the idea of what the day of tomorrow may bring over parents, brothers and children, the eyes of all the peoples look out to the one light in the pitch dark sky—the Royal Air Force of Great Britain. When in this war the Germans will be defeated, and I am sure they will, never in the history of mankind one people will have so much deserved the blessings of hundreds of millions now threatened by oppression and slavery." The statuette has been transmitted by Air Marshal Sholto Douglas to Squadron-Leader A. G. Malan, D.S.O., D.F.C. and bar, a young South African who commands one of London's Spitfire squadrons.

American Food for French Children

THE British Government has acceded to a personal request by President Roosevelt to allow passage through the blockade of limited supplies of concentrated foods and of clothing from America to the children in unoccupied France. These supplies are to be distributed to the most needy by the American Red Cross, who guarantee that none shall benefit the enemy. There has hitherto been opposition on the part of Britain to permit the passage of food ships, for it was felt that to feed the stricken inhabitants of enslaved countries in Europe would merely strengthen Hitler's hand.

Night Life Underground

LONDON Transport officials make a nightly census of the numbers of people who use the Underground and Tube stations and tunnels as air raid shelters. The highest figure recorded—177,500—was on the night of September 27, for Londoners had been made uneasy by heavy raids over both central and suburban areas on the night of the 26th, and were taking no chances. The average figure in October was 138,000, and in November 116,000. On Christmas night it dropped to 75,000. The present figure is 96,000. According to shelter officials, most of their guests are asleep by 10.30. London's Tube stations afford very much better accommodation than the large public shelters in many a provincial town, and Lord Horder, after touring those at Manchester, advised people to stay at home during raids.

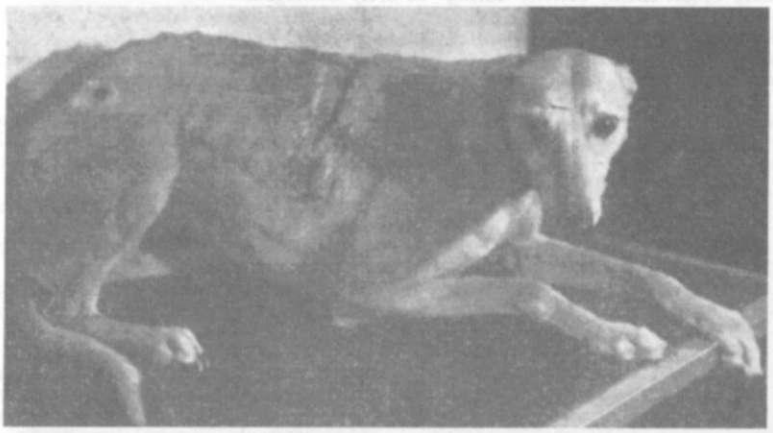
Pro-British Sympathies in Syria

GENERAL DENTZ, the new High Commissioner in Syria who succeeded the ill-fated M. Chiappe, is a close friend of General Weygand, under whose direct orders he holds his post. His appointment has therefore been interpreted as part of a plan of the Pétain Government to ensure unity of action in countries of the French Empire in the event of any situation that might arise between France and Germany. General Dentz has imposed a ban upon all political meetings, but in spite of this pro-British feeling is stronger than ever and continues to grow as Italian prestige diminishes.

Insoluble Problem of German Jews

JEWISH refugees from Germany now in unoccupied France are presenting a grave problem to the Vichy Government, who have to feed and house them. An appeal was therefore made to the United States to arrange to receive them, either alone or in conjunction with other American republics. But the United States Government believes that it would be playing into Hitler's hands to receive Jews whom he is driving out of his country, and has refused the appeal on two main grounds: first, that no distinction could be made between refugees on religious and racial considerations; secondly, that no basic changes could be made in the existing immigration laws, and quota limits were already filled. Another reason for rejecting the French request was that Frenchmen who had been granted the necessary American visa to enter the United States had not been able to do so because Vichy refused exit permits.

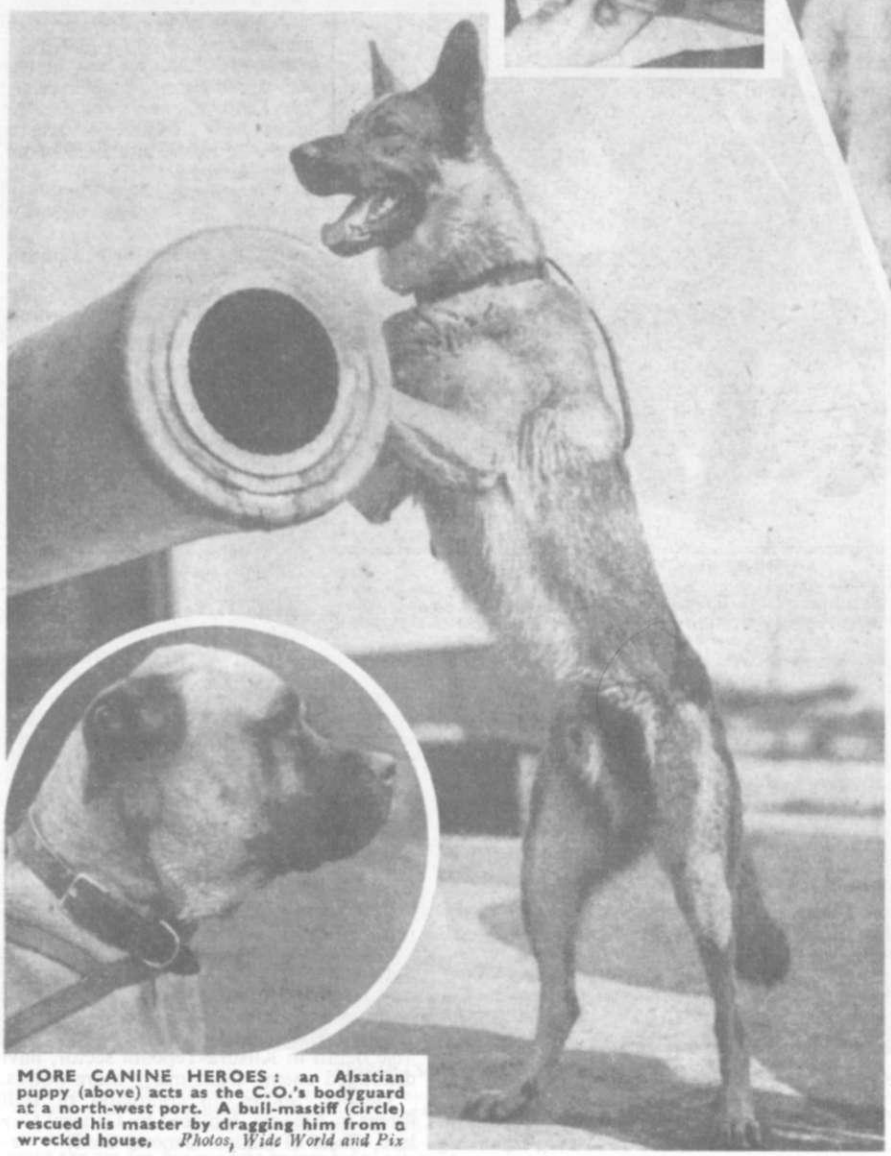
What Have *These* Done to Hitler?



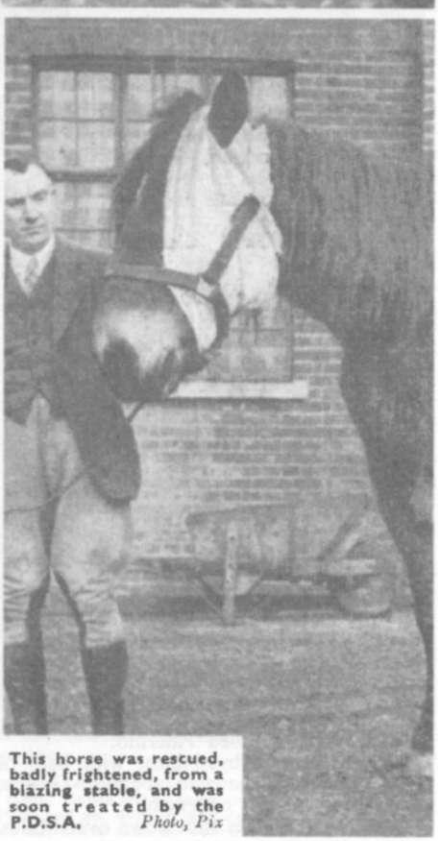
ANIMAL VICTIMS of the Nazi raiders have been only too many; here are two of them. A greyhound, while searching for his master, an A.R.P. warden, was wounded by shrapnel and was rescued by the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. Then here is a pigeon which had its tail shot away and sustained a breast wound in the fire raid on London on Dec. 29, 1940.

"Chum," an Airedale, extricated a woman from her shelter; here she is with her rescuer (right). "Chum" was awarded the "Dogs' V.C."—the Bravery Medal of Our Dumb Friends' League.

Photos, Pix, "Daily Mirror," and Planet News



MORE CANINE HEROES: an Alsatian puppy (above) acts as the C.O.'s bodyguard at a north-west port. A bull-mastiff (circle) rescued his master by dragging him from a wrecked house. *Photos, Wide World and Pix*



This horse was rescued, badly frightened, from a blazing stable, and was soon treated by the P.D.S.A. *Photo, Pix*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

TUESDAY, JAN. 7, 1941 *493rd day*

War against Italy—Operations towards Tobruk proceeding satisfactorily. Reported that during operations at Bardia three Blackshirt commanders deserted their troops, leaving Regular commanders to fight on.

Home Front—Daylight raids by single aircraft. Bombs fell in a number of places including London and town in Midlands. No enemy activity at night. Enemy aircraft shot down by A.A. fire off East Coast.

Greek War—Greek Admiralty announced that on night of Jan. 5 Greek destroyers, sailing unmolested into Adriatic, heavily bombarded Valona, firing 60 shells.

R.A.F. bombers raided military stores and buildings at Elbasan.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 8 *494th day*

On the Sea—Admiralty announced that H.M. submarine "Tuna" had reported night engagement on surface with U-boat in enemy waters; U-boat was damaged by shell-fire and then chased for an hour.

Admiralty stated that H.M. submarine "Regulus" was overdue and must be considered lost.

In the Air—R.A.F. bombers attacked naval dockyards at Wilhelmshaven and Emden. Other aircraft bombed aerodrome on island of Borkum.

War against Italy—Concentration of British forces in Tobruk area continuing. Italian garrison now hemmed in. R.A.F. continued intensive bombing of Italian aerodromes and landing-grounds in Eastern Libya. Benghazi and Tobruk were also raided. Enemy convoys north-west of Jarabub were attacked and damaged.

On nights of Jan. 6-7 and 7-8 Massawa was heavily raided.

Home Front—During day single enemy aircraft dropped bombs in East Anglia and Midlands. No night raids.

Junkers 88 shot down by R.A.F. fighters.

Greek War—Athens reported that during preceding week Greeks had made advances in three sectors—coastal region, Klisura area, where important fortified peaks were captured, and northern region.

Lord Baden-Powell died in Kenya.

THURSDAY, JAN. 9 *495th day*

On the Sea—Reported that British steamer "Shakespear" had been sunk off Azores on Jan. 5 after 3-hour fight with U-boat.

First unit of Free French Navy, submarine "Narval," reported sunk by enemy action.

In the Air—R.A.F. bombers' main target was synthetic oil plant at Gelsenkirchen. Others were inland ports of Duisberg-Ruhrort and Düsseldorf, oil plant at Rotterdam, docks at Flushing, Dunkirk and Calais.

Coastal Command aircraft heavily attacked docks at Brest.

War against Italy—Preparations for reduction of Tobruk proceeding.

R.A.F. carried out heavy raid on Messina during night of 9-10; bombs fell across cruisers in harbour and army marshalling yards. Warships, merchant shipping, docks and railway station attacked at Naples. Other aircraft bombed Palermo.

Reported that Abyssinians, with help of R.A.F., forced Italians to abandon Gubba, and were closing in on enemy.

Five Italian 'planes shot down over Malta.

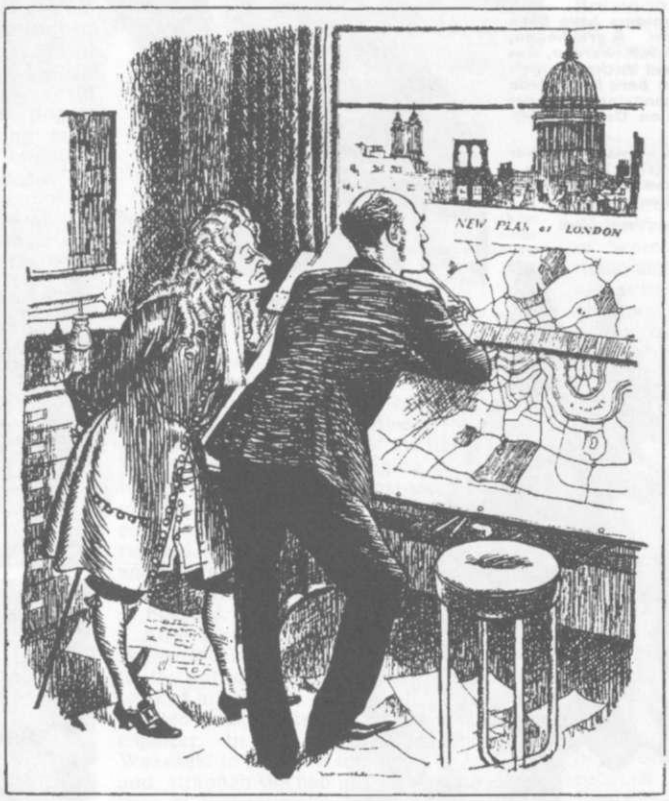
Home Front—Slight enemy activity during day, mostly near East and South-east coasts. At night raids occurred over widely separated areas, including London and Liverpool.

Two German aircraft brought down at night by A.A. fire in North-west.

Greek War—Local engagements, during which Greeks occupied important heights at the bayonet point.

FRIDAY, JAN. 10 *496th day*

On the Sea—Fierce engagement between British warships, escorting convoy with material for Greece, and German and Italian aircraft, after an Italian destroyer had been sunk in Sicilian Channel. H.M. destroyer "Gallant," aircraft-carrier "Illustrious" and cruiser "Southampton" suffered casualties and damage. At least 12 enemy aircraft shot down. Convoy passed through according to plan.



'TWIXT REITH AND WREN

"Charming, Sir Christopher! And now where shall we put the power stations, the communal restaurants, the airports, the bus depots, the overhead cross-roads, the multiple stores, the municipal baths and the B.B.C.?"

From the cartoon by Illingworth, by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch"

In the Air—Mass daylight raids by R.A.F. bombers and fighters on aerodromes and military installations in Northern France.

At night R.A.F. attacked Brest U-boat base and shipping in harbour of Le Havre.

War against Italy—Covered by operations to westwards, concentration of British forces around Tobruk continued.

During nights of 9-10 and 10-11 R.A.F. bombers heavily raided aerodromes at Benina and Berca. Benghazi also was attacked.

Aircraft of Fleet Air Arm carried out raid on shipping in Palermo harbour.

On Kenya frontier British troops entered villages of Buna and Turbi unopposed.

In Italian East Africa Caproni workshops at Mai Adaga were bombed. Asmara was also raided.

Defence positions of Berbera, Somaliland, attacked by R.A.F.

Home Front—Enemy made heavy night attack on Portsmouth. Twenty-eight big fires were caused and there were many casualties. Among buildings destroyed were six churches. Working-class districts were severely damaged.

Two enemy 'planes destroyed, one by night patrols, one by A.A. fire.

Greek War—Klisura taken by Greeks, Italians retreating towards Berat.

SATURDAY, JAN. 11 *497th day*

In the Air—R.A.F. bombers attacked in daylight number of targets on or near Dutch and Belgian coasts.

During night other aircraft bombed shipbuilding yards at Wilhelmshaven.

War against Italy—Shelling of Tobruk by British forces intensified.

R.A.F. bombed railway and docks at Benghazi, and barracks and defences at Derna.

R.A.F. bombed Royal Arsenal at Turin.

Home Front—Many thousands of incendiaries were dropped during night raid on London. High explosive bombs fell at intervals in several districts. Street subway, where people were sheltering, wrecked.

Greek War—Greeks pushing on from Klisura in direction of Berat. R.A.F. attacked retreating troops and convoys.

SUNDAY, JAN. 12 *498th day*

In the Air—During small hours British fighter patrols attacked from low level troops in trenches near French coast.

During night Bomber Command attacked oil targets in Germany, Belgium and Italy, including refineries at Regensburg, on the Danube, and Porto Marghera, near Venice. Docks at Brest, Le Havre and Lorient were again bombed.

War against Italy—Preparatory activities in Tobruk area still proceeding.

R.A.F. raided aerodromes at Berca and Benina.

During night R.A.F. made series of attacks on aerodrome at Catania, Sicily, causing severe damage.

On Sudan frontier British troops reported to have made successful raids on Italian positions about Metemma.

In Italian East Africa night raids were made on aerodromes at Asmara, Barentu, and Agordat, and on Caproni workshops at Mai Adaga.

Home Front—No air activity during day. After dark bombs fell in London and at several places near Thames Estuary.

Greek War—Athens reported limited mopping-up operations. Greeks occupied positions of cardinal importance north-west of Klisura. In coastal sector they continued to advance and occupy new positions.

MONDAY, JAN. 13 *499th day*

In the Air—Coastal Command aircraft successfully raided submarine base at Lorient. R.A.F. bombers attacked Dunkirk area.

War against Italy—Systematic preparation for capture of Tobruk continued. Italian forces still in Libya remained passive.

Home Front—No daylight activities. At night enemy made heavy attack on Plymouth. Thousands of fire bombs preceded high explosives. Severe damage and casualties.

Greek War—Greeks advanced to considerable depth in Klisura-Tepelini sector, having dislodged enemy from many more points.

General Soddu, in command of Italian forces in Albania, replaced by General Cavallero, Chief of Italian General Staff.